



Come and get your precious coins

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

A Greek coin, dating back more than 4,000 years ago, was found on the streets of Amman recently. However, this unique coin fetched just JD 10 on the Jordanian market. Avid collectors can have a field day shopping around for coins, that quite often date back to the dawn of history. Their monetary value can be limitless, since they represent a specific time and place.

Mr Isya Ozgal, a Turkish collector who has lived in the Kingdom for the last 23 years, enjoys working in this trade. "It's a joy to read up on the differ-

ent coins, since they remind you of all the historical changes and developments that have taken place in the world," said Ozgal, who owns a small shop near the Roman Amphitheater.

The 64-year-old lavishly displays some of his collection, which includes various Palestinian denominations during the British occupation, and a 10 Mills coin that has inscriptions in three different languages: Arabic, Hebrew and English.

The majority of customers who frequent his shop are tourists from abroad looking to buy and sell, but there are some Jordanian coin collectors.

"Most of what you see comes from people who

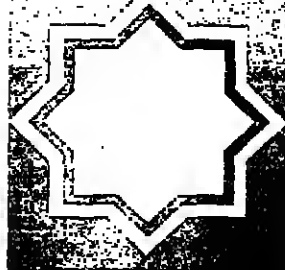
travelled outside the Kingdom, and then returned, bringing the coins with them. After a while, they like to sell their collections or exchange them with others," the trader from Turkey adds.

There used to be many peddlers next to his shop, and in downtown generally, who used to display their coins on pavements. They have now largely disappeared, following the Greater Amman Municipality decision to remove them from the streets.

However, if you know where to look then you can still find them. However, once you find them

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The Star



Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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أسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Lower House blocs give cabinet conditional support

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

THE NEW government is going to sail through the Lower House observers say. This is because the majority of deputies are expected to give it the thumbs up in today's final vote of confidence session.

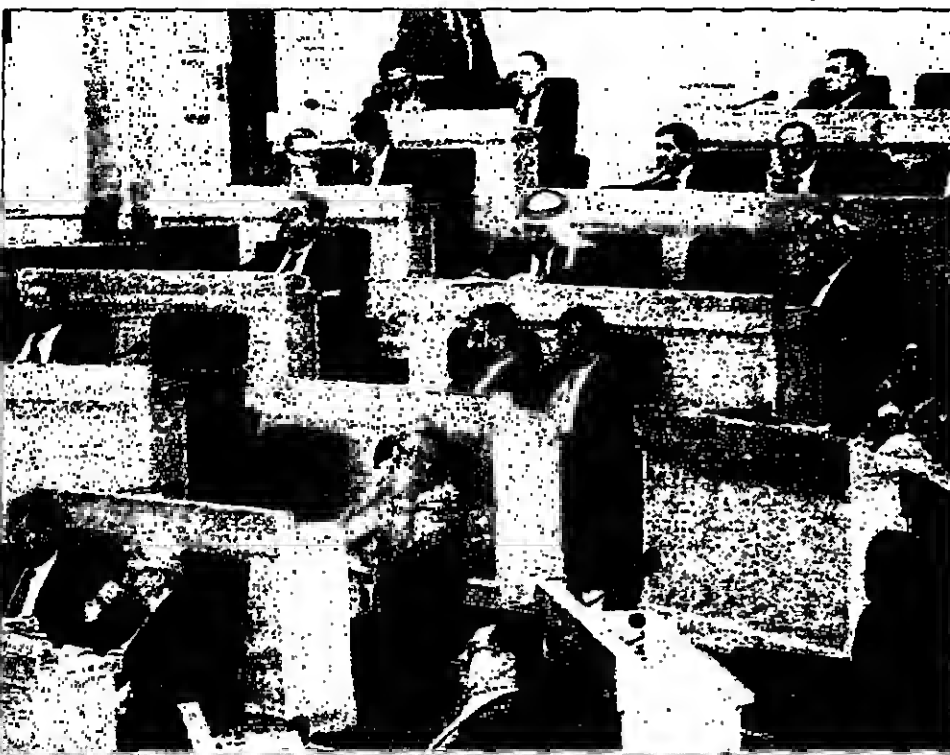
Dr Tarawneh's has already a majority of 45 deputies in the bag. Three parliamentary blocs have said they will give their votes to the new government.

The Solidarity Bloc, Al Wifaq, and the Parliamentary Coalition—controlling 18, 14 and 13 votes respectively—will give their votes to the government but conditionally.

This is not to say anything about the other non-opposition deputies and independents who are sure to give Dr Tarawneh their votes.

But political observers are not so reassuring. They say that the margin of support is still anybody's guess.

This view is influenced by opposition deputies some of whom are abstaining, while others walking out of the previous two-day sessions debate. However, even the opposition deputies don't have a clear-cut view. One said that



Waiting for the vote! There could still be room for few surprises

be was abstaining because he neither wants to be seen in the lap of the government, nor as one who is against it.

"This attitude highlights the state of the opposition in the

Lower House which is mainly because of their views on many legislations one of whom is the current 'one man, one vote' law, said one observer. "Opposition deputies

are angry because they feel that [electoral law] doesn't represent the diverse sections in Jordanian society," he added.

In the previous sessions, deputies focused mainly on internal matters, especially the issue of economic stagnation. Kamel Al Omari of Wifaq wondered why foreign and local investors were scared of entering into the Jordanian market, whilst Hamada Fara'neh (Independent) angered many—10 walked out in protest—when he talked about the fact that Jordanians of Palestinian origins do face obstacles.

But Lower House Speaker, Saad Hayel Srour, quickly reminded Fara'neh that all the four million inhabitants of the Kingdom enjoy equal rights.

Dr Tarawneh could still face the music though. The three coalition blocs in addition to independents, have already signed a memo calling for another vote of confidence in the government before the end

of the coming parliamentary ordinary session. They want to make sure that the cabinet sticks to its agenda.

They are giving the Government a six month respite, before facing another confidence vote.

Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Coalition angered some Jordanians. "I am astonished to find that two-thirds of the members of the Lower House have a unified stand," said Dr Saeed Abu Meizar, a Nationalist and a former President of the Dentists Association.

"This clearly indicates the dominance of the Executive on the Legislature, it seems that all deputies want to vote for the Government because of personal reasons," said Abu Meizar. "Even if they do meet again in six months time, it looks certain that the Government will get their vote again."

This view was challenged. "I think deputies have showed democratic courage, they placed national unity before personal gain," said Dr Faisal Al Rifai, head of the Political Science Department at the University of Jordan said. "I would give the cabinet my vote of confidence, if I were a deputy," he told The Star.

Mansour Seif Al Din Morad, a deputy for Russeifa, stormed out of a meeting as the three coalition blocs were formulating their speech.

"The text and discussions which followed do not oblige this Government to implement its agenda," Morad said, "and I withdrew from the session, because some deputies in the blocs are former ministers seeking to enhance their personal interests."

"I don't think the Government will implement a complete economic program, because they are still adhering to the policies of the World Bank, privatization, globalization and the European Partnership," he added.

However, Morad is all for coalition blocs. "I believe that what unifies the Government most is a unified parliamentary action," Morad pointed out.

Lurie's NewsCartoon



Iranian leader sends signal on Rushdie

By Barton Gellman

NEW YORK—Iranian President Mohammad Khatami told reporters Tuesday that, "We should consider the Salman Rushdie matter completely finished," his first direct, public comment on the decade-old death sentence for blasphemy against the author of a novel deemed insulting to Islam.

Khatami, who spoke for

nearly two hours in an unusual breakfast meeting and subsequent formal interview with several journalists, stopped short of invalidating the religious edict, and accompanying bounty that has been one of Iran's most contentious points of division with the West. But he made several remarks that distanced him from the call for Rushdie's assassination issued by the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the spiritual leader of Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, according to the LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

Iran's head of government also took appreciative note of President Clinton's Monday speech to the United Nations General Assembly and went slightly further than he has done before in envisioning government-to-government contacts. He said the two nations had "taken important steps" in the past year that could "pave the way to remove the misunderstandings between the two governments," which have had no diplomatic relations since American hostages were held in Tehran in 1979-80.

But Khatami made clear that Iran must shed its mistrust of



Khatami at the UN

Washington before his government will consider direct diplomatic talks, adding, "We cannot do so with words alone." He cited as ongoing hostile acts, the US economic sanctions, frozen Iranian assets, and efforts to prevent construction of an international gas pipeline across Iran from Central Asia to Turkey. A senior subordinate singled out change in the US pipeline policy as a precondition to diplomatic talks.

The Clinton administration, in public and in secret channels through Switzerland, has called for direct talks to resolve outstanding disputes, among which it has cited Iran's alleged support for terrorists and its

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Unemployment conference concludes with practical proposals

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

NOW THAT the Government has been given the vote of confidence by the Deputies of the Lower House, it can begin to tackle the grave problems facing the Kingdom, notably the worsening economic situation and the stubborn unemployment rate.

Concern for the number of unemployed has reached such heights that a National Conference was held recently (20-22 September), with the objective of finding solutions to the problem.

During a press conference, convened after the three-day event, Minister for Administrative Development, Dr Bassam Omoush, stressed that the conference had

concluded a strategy to tackle unemployment and eradicate poverty. The mechanisms to fulfill this strategy will be focused on reorganizing the labor market through a national awareness campaign showing the value of labor (thereby tackling the 'shame culture'), and on building an accurate data-base to provide real information on the Jordanian manpower status.

It is still too early to tell if the conference, but it is obvious that the instructions given by His Majesty King Hussein—in his designation letter to Dr Fayez Tarawneh—are being taken into account.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan

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Ex-franchisee fires salvo at McDonald's

By Juanita Darling

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador—As the quintessential symbol of American pop culture, McDonald's is used in being the target of anti-imperialist rhetoric.

So the advertisements that Salvadoran radio listeners have been hearing lately—on this nation's Independence Day, no less—urging them to defend their sovereignty against Big Mac are hardly surprising. At least, they're not surprising until the announcer explains who paid for them.

These spots are not placed by radical leftists or cuisine zealots who believe that eating pupusas, the country's favorite dish, is the ultimate expression of nationalism. Rather, the sponsor is a respected businessman and former McDonald's licensee.

Since losing the McDonald's franchise that he maintained throughout the 12-year war between the government and Marxist

rebels, Roberto Bukela has become El Salvador's foremost critic of Ronald McDonald.

In addition to radio and newspaper ads, he has periodically put a few dozen employees of his Golden-Arched-stripped restaurants out in San Salvador's major streets in bedraggled protest marches to exhort McDonald's "to respect our laws."

The fight heated up in late summer when a new McDonald's opened in a fast-growing middle-class suburb of this capital city.

Bukela estimates that he spends 90 percent of his time in the half-dozen lawsuits he is pursuing against the giant corporation, filing complaints with US and Salvadoran government agencies and trying in rally support for his cause among politicians, civic groups and even peasant food managers.

"I have never counted up how much I have spent, because I do not want to be discouraged," he said. "I know I will never recover enough to compensate for the money and stress. I am doing this

for dignity—not pride, but dignity."

So, for Bukela, the dispute has become a crusade. But for McDonald's, it's more like a messy divorce. The corporation contends that Bukela's license simply expired in 1996. As for the 1994 letter from McDonald's International that agreed to renew his license for 20 years, the corporation's reply is equally simple: "There was an attempt to expand the license, and he did not comply with the conditions," said Manuel Juarez, spokesman for McDonald's Latin America. "The main problem was quality control."

Bukela denies that his fries were out of crispiness. He also notes that McDonald's officials did not visit his franchise once during the war years. One of his three restaurants was bombed and rebuilt and the other two survived under security that he estimates cost \$10,000 a month—all without any help from McDonald's, he says. Ironically, the guerrillas accused Bukela of "having brought the cultural penetration of Yankee imperialism to El Salvador," an evaluation not much different from his opinion of the corporation these days.

"What most bothers me is the ungratefulness," he said. "I protected the brand throughout the war, and now they want to take it over."

But, Juarez pointed out, "We own the brand."

The corporation won an injunction from a Salvadoran court earlier this year forcing Bukela to cover the McDonald's signs at his restaurants. "After that ruling, as the owners of the brand, we made use of it," Juarez said.

Bukela has appealed the court ruling and taken out full-page newspaper advertisements that allege "illegal conduct by McDonald's Corp. and its Salvadoran lawyers to our courts." Juarez replied: "McDonald's respects the laws of all 110 countries where we operate."

Still, Bukela insists that he has been wronged by the very corporation he so admired in the late 1960s, when he was a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin. "I told my then-girlfriend that I would bring McDonald's to El Salvador, and I did," he said.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

مكتبة النخيل

How does life in the 'Yard' measure up for Iraqis?

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

I FIRST saw him coming towards me, carrying a heavy load on his back. Every so often, he would take the box off his shoulders, and drag it along the road. The man was Abu Ahmad, from Iraq—one of many Iraqis currently in Jordan trying to eek out an existence.

"It wasn't possible for me to remain in Iraq; the situation there is hopeless," said Abu Ahmad, a father of three, whose eldest son died two months ago. "The first I heard about my son's death was when I returned to Iraq a couple of weeks ago," said the disheveled Iraqi, who added, "I was told that he needed to have an operation, but the lack of medicine and medical equipment caused by the UN sanction speeded his end."

The UN sanctions—imposed on Iraq for the last seven years—resulted in many deaths, especially among the newly born and aged. Group funerals of children have become a common sight in Iraq.

Neighboring Jordan is the only outlet for the many down-trodden Iraqis, and this partly explains why there are so many of them in the Kingdom in pursuit of work. Some resort to traveling between Baghdad and Amman, selling various assortment of items from food products and cigarettes, to shoes and leather jackets.

Business may not be great, but it is



A picture from the 'Yard'

enough to create a new community in Amman, known as the 'Iraqi Yard'—adjacent to Al Mahatta Camp, and only a

short ride away from the Raghdan Bus station. The 'Yard,' as it's affectionately known by the residents, was created soon

after the Gulf War, and now serves as a mid-way station for Iraqis coming to Jordan. Iraqis are permitted to stay in the Kingdom for only six months at a time, after which they must return to Iraq for a period of time, before applying for entry into Jordan again.

Abu Ahmad served in the army for 13 years, and is a veteran of both the Iran-Iraq war and the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. "I tried to find work in Iraq, but at the end of the day the money I was earning wasn't enough to buy me a kilo of tomatoes," Abu Ahmad lamented.

Hussein is in a similar position. Three years ago, he registered at the University of Baghdad, but did not have enough money to attend the engineering classes. His appearance is deceptive—he is 23 years old, but looks more like 50—and the ravages of time are etched all over his face. "I am not married, but I send most of the money I earn back to support my family," said Hussein, who spends his days carrying large cardboard boxes full of leather shoes made in Iraq.

These 'yardies' are willing to do anything to make a bit of money. At the station, one driver aroused curiosity by the various boxes and 'chilling' units that where in the back of his car. On closer inspection, the boxes were seen to contain tanks of freshwater fish, destined for the lucrative Gulf markets.

However, life in the 'Yard' can often

run into stormy waters. Officials from the Customs Dept., are constantly on the look out, and will confiscate goods that have been brought into the Kingdom illegally. Meanwhile, the Greater Amman Municipality is currently trying to stop residents from selling their goods at one particular site, because it contravenes regulations. Yet, despite these problems, life in the 'Yard' doesn't change much from day to day.

Generally, the new residents have been welcomed by Amman, but there are a few causes of tension. The majority of Iraqis adhere to the Shi'a faith, which differs slightly—mainly in the performance of certain rituals—to the predominately Sunni community in Amman. Abu Haidar, an Iraqi Muslim, told *The Star* that he "faced some resentment when praying, because in the Shi'a faith we don't prostrate ourselves during prayers; contrary to the Sunni faith."

Yon certainly won't find any resentment from Awad Ma'ayta, the owner of a residential building in Al Mahatta. "I have approximately 60 Iraqis living in my 26 room apartment building, although I only receive JD 10 from each of them," he said. Summing up the life of the 'Yard' residents, he added, "I believe these people deserve more, especially after what they have had to endure over the last few years, and they should receive better treatment from those in authority as well."

Unemployment conference concludes with practical proposals

Continued from page 1

san, the Regent, is equally determined to solve the Unemployment problem. Prince Hassan opened the venue, and in his opening speech reiterated that, "We are not meeting today just to discuss our concerns. Instead, we must conclude suggestions and provide solutions to end this humanitarian problem; a problem that has a political, a social and an economic dimension."

The ball is now firmly in the Government's court, as the Higher Committee affiliated to the National Conference will soon hold its first meeting to discuss the recommendations and their means of implementation.

The representation at the National Conference came from the private sector, the

Labor Unions, Political Parties, finance institutions, investment promotion corporations, and NGOs.

All the delegates were asked to submit working papers, and these mainly focused on proposals to establish a National Center for Employment, the provision of non-profit loans for those without jobs, amending the current Labor Law and expansion proposals for the industrial zones.

Mr Issam Al Shareef, the representative of the Lawyers Association, was asked to present a paper aimed at evaluating the legislative procedures needed to implement the conference's suggestions. He dealt with the issue of training courses, to boost the skills and abilities of the Jordanian workforce, and the creation of job

opportunities, by introducing laws that will encourage investment projects and attract foreign capital.

Also, on Al Shareef's agenda, was a proposal for a minimum wage once a worker has reached a certain age.

Lawyer Zuhair Abu Al Ragheb, commenting on Al Shareef's paper reiterated that, "We must shoulder our responsibilities: individuals, institutions, the government and the private sector alike, in order to combat unemployment in a scientific and methodical manner."

He continued, "The suggestions and recommendations presented in Al Shareef's paper deserve our attention, and I think that they will contribute greatly to solving the problem." Abu Al Ragheb, in sup-

port of one of Al Shareef's recommendations, called for the cancellation of Article 31 of the Labor Law, which allows the employer to terminate a contract at any time, without the need for any explanation. This call was backed up by the Labor Unions as well.

Abu Al Ragheb also called for the establishment of special employment offices to deal with worker exploitation, amending the existing article in the Labor Law relating to overtime, expanding the specialized industrial zones, and the provision of investment incentives. The role of education was also stressed by Abu Al Ragheb, to ensure that the future workforce will be ready to face the demands of the 21st Century. (See page 5 for more details.)

US Middle-East expert hails Jordanian democracy

AMMAN (Petra)—A US

Middle East specialist admired the progress Jordan has accomplished in its move to establish a democratic society, strengthen the freedom of the press, improve economic growth, and maintain openness with the outside world.

Judith Kipper, Director of the Washington-based Council on Foreign Relations for the Middle East Forum said the US is fully concerned with realizing peace in the Middle East, but it could not exercise further pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu because the US Congress supports Netanyahu's policies.

Kipper made her remarks

in a lecture delivered Monday at a workshop organized by Jordan University's Center for Strategic Studies, which was attended by a number of Jordanian intellectuals and politicians. Kipper, who is a coordinator of the Middle East Studies Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the US Administration is working with all parties to achieve peace in the region, through maintaining a continuous dialogue with the parties concerned, and she was confident that peace would soon come, in the region sooner or later.

In her lecture, Kipper elaborated on the US policy concerning Iraq, Iran and international terrorism. She rejected the claim that the UN Security Council is biased to the US stand on Iraq. She maintained that there are some members of the council who are sympathetic to Iraq, but the council is just implementing the international will.

The US Administration intends to normalize relations with Iran; as the Iranian leadership is keen to establish balanced relations with the outside world.

Kipper expressed confidence in the future of the region. She saw the future as promising, one where the states of the region defined and shaped their economic and political future.

For the Record

Regent accepts new ambassadors

AMMAN (Petra)—HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, accepted, Tuesday, the credentials of the new ambassadors of France and Belgium. The Regent was welcomed upon arrival at Raghdan Palace by a guard of honor and the national anthem. The two ambassadors arrived at the Palace to the sound of their national anthems as well, and later they laid wreaths at the tombs of the late King Abdullah and King Talal. The ceremony was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Jawad Anani, His Majesty King Hussein's advisor Salah Abu-Zeid, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdel Ilah Al Khatib.

Jordan-Palestinian environmental cooperation

AMMAN (Petra)—A delegation of the Palestinian Nature Conservation Society held a meeting, Tuesday, with the director of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, Khaled Irani, to discuss bilateral cooperation on the environment. The two sides reviewed the basis of cooperation between the two bodies, and the best ways to protect the nature and environment in Jordan and Palestine. They also discussed the possibility of holding workshops and seminars, and for training Palestinian personnel. Head of the Palestinian Society, Abdel Aziz Al Lahadi, appreciated the RSCN official's willingness to give training and moral support to their society. The Palestinian delegation had earlier visited the Dana Wildlife Reserve, and were briefed on the programs and plans implemented at the reserve, including the long-term administrative plan.

Arab Social Development Ministers meet in Cairo

CAIRO (Petra)—Meetings of the Executive Office of the Arab Social Affairs Ministerial Council began in Cairo on Tuesday. During the two-day meeting, the executive council discussed issues relating to joint Arab works for society, as well as means to promote the council's activities during 1999. Other topics discussed, included woman and child related issues, the implementation of the working plan of the International Social Development Summit, held in Copenhagen in 1995, and the Woman Summit, held in Beijing in 1995. The executive council will submit its recommendations to the Ministerial Council of Arab Social Affairs during its next session to be held on 18 November.

Jordan-Saudi meeting

AMMAN (Petra)—His Royal Highness Prince Hassan received on Monday the Saudi Minister of State, Abdul Aziz Al Mane'e, who handed a letter from King Fahad of Saudi Arabia to His Majesty King Hussein. Al Mane'e conveyed the greetings of King Fahad and Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz to His Majesty King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan.

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Classified

Come and get your precious coins

Continued from page 1

you need to be on your toes. One collector refused to talk to the press, because he feared they were from the Municipality. After much debate, he showed the package to *The Star*. It turned out that he was dealing in foreign currency—illegal in the Kingdom.

In another souvenir shop, the collections vary from metallic coins to paper notes. The salesman is still a college student, who has become an avid collector himself.

"I find it very exciting, useful, but at the same time difficult to collect unique pieces," Tawfiq Abdel Hameed, who seemed to be addicted to the trade, told *The Star*.

"We bring our coins and paper notes from different countries. Sometimes, people want to sell their old pieces, at cheap prices, so we take the coins off them," said Abdel Hameed, displaying a collection of coins from Egypt dating back in 1916, as well as coins dating back to the reigns

of King Fuad and King Farouk.

"I once sold a Palestinian 10 pound note that dated back in 1927 for JD 700," Hameed adds, "but from my knowledge of the market, I can say that the greatest demand is for currencies during the time of King Abdullah."

Hameed also talked of the currency misprints that he has come across over the years.

"I once found a JD 10 note that was printed on just one side; there was nothing on its back. The Central Bank was obliged to collect the paper currency from the market," he noted.

In another store selling antiques and oriental collections, Mohammed Al Masri lamented that it's not a profitable business, which is why he is trying to get rid of all of his coin collection. "I used to welcome the people who bought these coins, but now that the number of tourists has dropped markedly, it just is not profitable any more," Al Masri concluded.

Human rights in Jordan

NEW YORK (Petra)—Jordan has reaffirmed its full support of human rights, particularly the right to self-determination.

The UN Commission on Human Rights received the Jordanian reply to the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's verbal memorandum addressed to world governments, aimed at providing the international organization with the necessary information on human rights violations. The Jordanian reply spoke of human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories.

The report is due to be submitted to the UN General Assembly's 53rd meeting, in New York. Jordan reiterated its strong belief in the right to self-determination. This has been clearly demonstrated

through Jordan's support of the Palestinian people in their struggle to determine their future on their national soil. Jordan also supports the people of Bosnia in their bid to strengthen their national identity.

Jordanian policy has always been against ethnic cleansing, and all forms of discrimination and apartheid. The Jordanian government underlined the necessity to avoid double standards when dealing with human rights.

The report is due to be submitted to the UN General Assembly's 53rd meeting, in New York. Jordan reiterated its strong belief in the right to self-determination. This has been clearly demonstrated

The management of The Star and its editorial staff sadly offers their condolences for the passing away of Na elah Ahmed Hilmi Abdul Baqi

Wife of Abdul Majeed Shoman, mother of Abdul Hameed and Ahmed Shoman, and the aunt of Khaled Shoman

The Star consoles the Shoman and Hilmi families and expresses its sympathy for them hoping that God be merciful on the deceased, and give strength to those she left behind.

Iranian leader sends signal on Rushdie

Continued from page 1

nonconventional weapons programs.

With a quarter million Iranian troops massed on the border with neighboring Afghanistan, Khatami expressed hope for no optimism that Iran's dispute with Afghanistan's dominant Taliban movement could be resolved peacefully.

The tone of his remarks, including accusations of "genocide" by the Taliban, raised fresh concerns among US analysts that cross-border violence might soon break out.

The very existence of the Taliban is dangerous in the region, and one cannot calculate their behavior very much, and you do know that we share borders, and insecurity on our borders is hard to tolerate. But we are confident that a protracted war will not benefit anyone," Khatami said.

Khatami's remarks on Rushdie were the first in public for a president who took office a year ago on a platform of internal reform and rule of law.

Without referring to Khatami by name, Khatami referred to the Ayatollah's February 14, 1989 religious ruling as an "opinion" by "an Islamic jurist," using a formulation that suggested there could be dis-

agreement by jurists of similar rank. He then repeated a statement by more junior officials that "the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has officially announced that in practice it has made no decision to act on this matter."

Rushdie, a British citizen, has lived mostly in hiding in Britain and the United States since Khomeini put a bounty on his head. Translators of his novel, *The Satanic Verses*, have been killed or wounded in Italy, Turkey and Japan. As recently as February, Iran's chief prosecutor, Mortezae Moqtadaie, renewed the verdict in a sermon at Tehran University, saying, "The shedding of this man's blood is obligatory."

An ostensibly private foundation in Iran, associated with hard-line government factions, continues to back the reward, since raised to \$2.5 million.

Iranian diplomats acknowledged Tuesday that Khatami did not address the financial bounty on Rushdie but they hinted Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi would have more to say in public about it on Thursday. Kharrazi is scheduled to meet here then with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, who has described removal of the death threat as "central to our policy toward Iran." British

officials said they have no advance word of a shift in position by Iran on the bounty but would welcome one.

State Department spokesman James P. Rubin, also speaking Tuesday, responded cautiously to Khatami's remarks on the British author.

"With respect to the reported position on Rushdie, our concerns in this area are strong and well-known," Rubin said. "We are aware of what has been said today and we're going to be looking into it."

Khatami portrayed the Rushdie affair as the "manifestation of the war of civilizations which was begun by the West against Muslim countries," saying, "We have only embarked on a defensive approach in that respect." He added, "From now on instead of war we want a dialogue of civilizations."

In a deliberate echo of that phrase, which Khatami first used in a Cable News Network earlier this year, Clinton used his UN speech Monday to set "a course of friendship and respect for the Muslim world" and to deny that "there is an inevitable clash between Western civilizations and Western values, and Islamic civilizations and values."

spoke highly of Clinton's speech.

"Whenever we resort to respectful language, we can create an environment to resolve our problems," Khatami said. "I think he spoke with respect about Muslims and Islamic countries."

Asked about Washington's concerns over Iranian flight-testing of an intermediate range ballistic missile, and about military support for Hamas and Hezbollah, the Palestinian and Lebanese Islamic movements, Khatami replied impatiently.

"We have over and over again expressed our concern that Israel has become a center for nuclear weapons and for weapons of mass destruction," he said. "We definitely support the need for the region to be totally free of weapons of mass destruction, and we are ready to cooperate in any respect in this field, but we too have the right to defend ourselves and make efforts in that respect."

As for military aid to Hamas and Hezbollah, he said, "We do not give such support to anyone." But he did acknowledge non-military aid to "groups that make efforts and struggle to restore their rights and fight the occupation of their land."

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JORDAN

WEEK



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Media forum

It is clear that last week's appointment of Mr Iyad Qattan as the new director of the Press and Publications Dept comes as a good will gesture to the press community in Jordan. Mr Qattan did not take long to spring his first surprise earlier this week. He revealed that a weekly "media forum" will be held in the press and publications building on the 3rd Circle. The purpose is to enable Mr Qattan and the Minister of Information to meet members of the press. Mr Qattan says that this is the first step of its kind, but analysts are asking what will happen to the current weekly press meeting with the Minister of Information, Nasser Judeh. It seems that nobody is willing to say at the moment.



Education

Dr Ahmed Al Hussban, secretary of the Higher Education Council, said that 12 percent of the national budget went to schools in the country, whilst another three percent went to higher education. On another level, he said the main reason for abolishing the Ministry of Higher Education, replacing it with trustees for public universities, was to do with giving the latter more freedom and independence to develop themselves intellectually and to decide on the degree programs they wish to offer. Hussban said that this step would give them a strong push to develop their social, economic, and financial relationships with the outside community. Dr Hussban assured that the High Education Council would not interfere in the business of universities, however, he added that this doesn't mean that "we would ignore our financial responsibilities." However, he said the employees of the Ministry, once it is abolished, won't be themselves out of a job. They will be transferred to the HEC. He said that the American University that is going to be set up in Amman has a further two months to complete its application for a license. This is also the case with six other universities.

Dialogue

Last Sunday the chairman and the members of the Public Liberties Committee (PLC) in the Lower House received a delegation from the Jordanian Society for Human Rights. The discussions centered on issues of mutual interest, such as the conditions of inmates in the Jowdeh Rehabilitation Center, the transfer of prisoners in the Al-Jafer prison, the press, law, unemployment, and poverty. The Jordanian Society submitted a memorandum to the parliamentary committee explaining its views on the state of public liberties after the formation of the new government. The Rapporteur of PLC Mohammed Al Azydeh, and Committee member Asaf Al Asaf and Khalid Al Tawazh joined in the discussions.

Charity

Mr Waleed Al Jabari, chairman of the Khalil Al Rahman Charity said that the society is to stop providing assistance to 136 families. He said that the main reason was because the Customs Court refused their appeal demand.

As a result the charity was forced to pay JD 20,365 to the Customs Dept. So that's why they can no longer pay to poor families. The Customs Dept. ordered the Charity to pay more than JD 60,000 in taxes. Dr Mohammed Mamer, the Minister of Social Development said that his Ministry is trying to find a solution to this problem, but Mr Jabari said the government must yield so that the Charity can continue with its work.

Flight of Al Rama

The focus this week is on Al Rama, a village located in South Shua, east of the River Jordan, and on the highway between Amman, the Dead Sea and Aqaba. It covers 88,000 dunams, of which 2,000 are planted with banana trees, vegetables, citrus fruits and grain. The village has the basics for daily life, having public services and the potential for tourism. Indeed, tourism has become even more important after the discovery of Christ's Baptismal. Al Rama has a local authority, created in 1994. The head of the council said that although Al Rama does not have enough funds it is trying its best to implement infrastructure projects, like water, sewage, electricity and roads. The revenues of the council are minuscule. Although it gets a mere JD 5000 from local taxes, the council spends much more than that. Annual expenditure is estimated at JD 45,000.



Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received Chief of Staff of the Pakistani Marine Forces Lt. General Faseeh Bukhari, Monday, at the Royal Court. Prince Hassan, expressed worry over the strained situation between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran and underlined the necessity to settle the differences between these countries through peaceful means and on the basis of international legitimacy. The Regent warned against the escalation of tension, which might lead to a sectarian war that adversely affects the situation in Islamic countries and threatens stability and security in the region. As well as their discussions, The Regent conferred the Military Merit Medal of the first order on Lt General Bukhari.

Water crisis in Amman simmers down

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

THE NEW Minister of Water and Irrigation, Hani Al Mulqi, accompanied journalists to the Zai Water Treatment Plant, in a move to reassure the public that the water crisis was now over. In addition to the Zai Plant, the tour took in a number of water supply sites and intake points along the Jordan River, all with the purpose of emphasizing that the Jordan's water is drinkable once again. Mulqi's public relations exercise came after the recent 'non-transparent' decision by the General Prosecutor, which prevented the press from publishing the Fact Finding Committee's report on the recent water scandal.

However, the declarations made by Dr Mulqi seemed to contradict what the Minister of Health, Dr Nael Al Ajlouni, said in a recent press statement. Dr Al Ajlouni advised residents of Westero Amman, to continue to boil the water as a precautionary measure.

Is the water contamination crisis really over? Recently, both ministers (Ajlouni and Mulqi) admitted that Jordan's drinking water still contains the Nematode—the dead larva partly responsible for the change in color and odor of the water—but that its existence is not detrimental to human health.

There is also a rumor doing the rounds at the moment, that an Israeli water expert has suggested breeding Catfish in the Water Treatment Plants, as they feed on the algae—the other contaminant found in the drinking water. Dead larva, algae and now Catfish!



Irrigation, on legal grounds. The Court said that there was a lack of jurisdiction, as

the only authorized committee to examine Dr Haddadin's case was the Higher Council for the Trial of Ministers. Meanwhile, the director of the Zai Water Treatment Plant and another eight officials have since been released from detention at the Jowdeh prison. They managed to obtain JD 1000 bail.

These court decisions will be like salt on the wound for some, as the legal ramifications continue to reverberate. Munther Khlifat, the former secretary general at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, and his assistant for Water System Affairs, Sa'd Al Bakri, were both sentenced on Sunday to 14 days detention.

Press cocktail

Unemployment

A NUMBER of columnists in Al Rai concentrated on the recent conference on unemployment. Fakri Qawar tried to draw the attention of the participants and organizers of the conference to a very important issue; that of counter-immigration. At the beginning of the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of Jordanians came back from the Gulf, ready to enrich the country's economy with their experience. Yet, successive Jordanian governments allowed immigrants from Arab and non-Arab countries to work in Jordan, leaving the returnees with no jobs. In the following years the number of immigrants rose to 850,000 which is dangerous to the economy for two reasons. Firstly, because it transfers Jordanian money abroad, and secondly, because it deprives Jordanians of work.

On the other hand Sultan Hatlab concentrated on the concept of the so-called 'shame culture.' He said this culture is a facade that hides away the truth; there are other reasons for unemployment among Jordanians. For example, many jobs are either menial, demand long hours and with little pay. There are no laws to govern these kinds of jobs. Hatlab says the idea of shame can be overcome through correct political decisions, which requires a firm stand to be taken against foreign labor. The government should create training centers for Jordanians in order to replace foreign workers in all the sectors of the economy.

However for Hilmi Al Asmar writing in Ad Dustour the issue is very simple. He said the solution doesn't lie in conferences, such as the recent one. What is needed, he said, was a proper investment policy on the part of government. Such a policy would create jobs because it would curb the flight of capital, and encourage the return of indigenous capital that is already outside the country.

Al Asmar said that \$900 million of the capital in Jabal Ali belongs to Jordanian investors, and companies, and there is a lot more investments all around the world. The only way to encourage such capital to return is by having a prudent policy, with more incentives, less taxes, and less of a bureaucratic jungle. Easy, isn't it! Political will and determination are required though.

Sub-editor wanted

A textual editor (sub-editor) is required to work for an English-language weekly newspaper in Amman. Must be a native speaker. Duties include editing local, regional and international stories. A journalistic background is preferred. Those interested please telephone 5686121 (ext. 344) or send C/V to fax no 5667170.

Information Minister holds Press Conference

AMMAN (Petra)—Information Minister Nasser Judeh reiterated on Monday Jordan's stand of a total rejection of the Israeli measures to Judaize Jerusalem. During his weekly press conference, Judeh responded to a question concerning the escalation of tension between Iran and the Taliban, saying that Jordan calls always for dialogue as a means to solve conflicts, and for refraining from yielding to violence. Regarding Jordanian Arab relations the minister said that the cabinet's statement affirms Jordan's keenness for cementing Jordanian-Arab relations.

He pointed out to the meeting of the Jordanian-Palestinian Higher Joint Committee, which was held in Amman at the beginning of this week.

Judeh stressed that Jordan is going to activate relations with the Palestinian National Authority, in addition to continuing efforts with the Israeli side, to serve Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and to open the Palestinian markets for Jordanian exports. Responding to a question regarding combating narcotic smuggling, Judeh said that the development of new methods of combating narcotics and forgery



Judeh at a press conference

has contributed to the increased success in aborting smuggling operations and apprehending the perpetrators. He said that since 1996, the Anti Narcotics Department (AND) solved 1154 narcotic cases, in which 2088 persons were apprehended; 1838 of them Jordanians. During 1996, AND had solved 326 narcotic cases, in

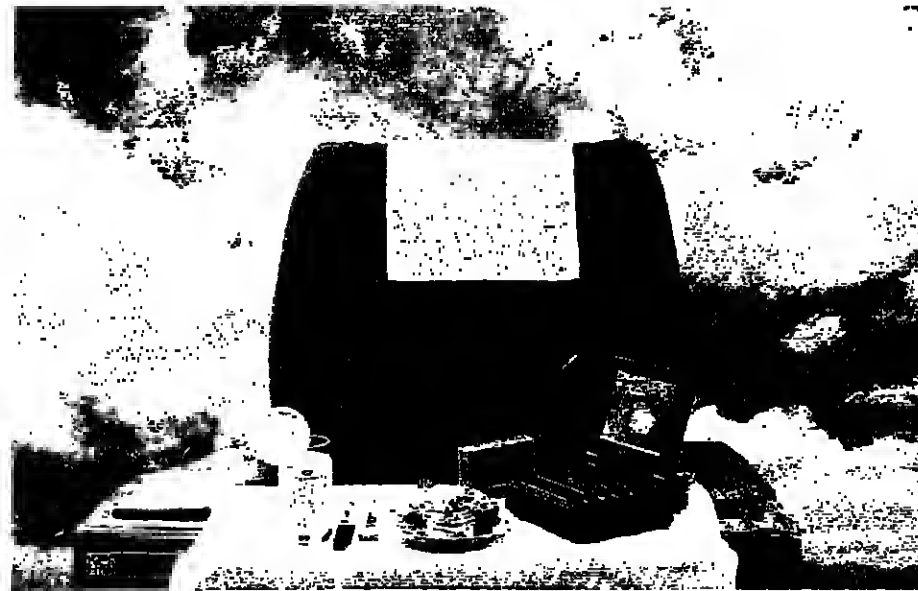
which 636 persons were apprehended; 556 of them Jordanians.

The minister pointed out that the perpetrators tried to smuggle in 1996, 1349 Kg of hashish, 67 Kg of heroine, 43 Kg of opium, 1.1 Kg of cocaine, and about 25.5 million pills. This year, AND has solved 336 narcotic cases involving 581 Jordanians and 48 non-Jordanians

were involved, who tried to smuggle in 33.4 Kg of hashish and 29.4 Kg of heroine. The minister added that 283 addicts had been treated since 1995 at the Special Rehabilitation Center of AND, and that the figures over the years were 60, 67, 76 and 80 during 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998 respectively.

All other airlines give you Business Class Business Class.

Our Crown Class is First Class Business Class.

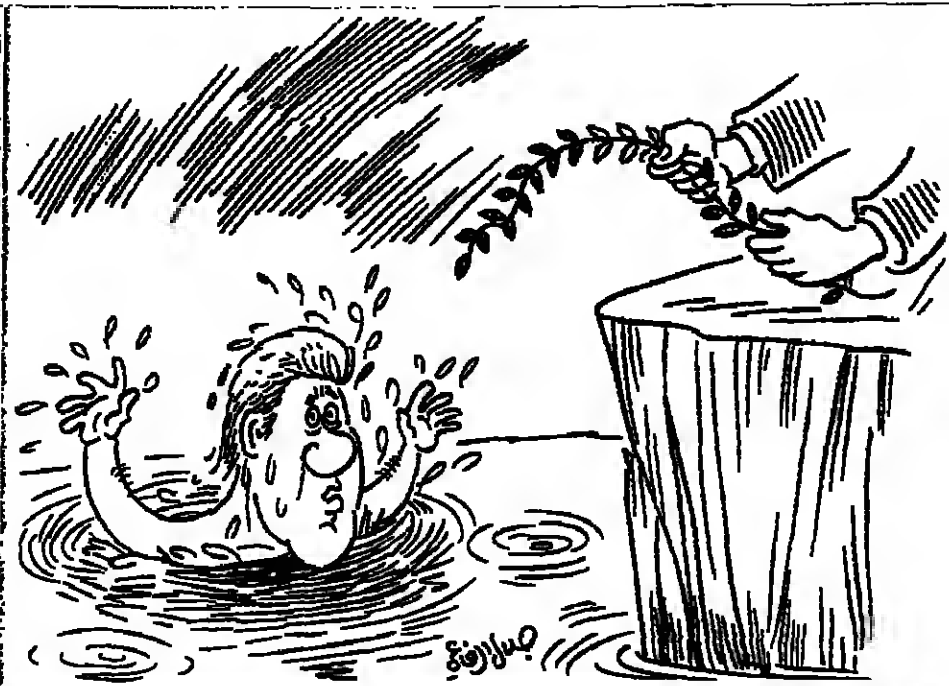


Business Class Business Class.

Other airlines have red-eye-in-the-dead-of-night departures. But, when Amman is wide awake, we fly out to Europe and North America most frequently. More than 36 convenient departures weekly. We've also got the only 24-hour Advanced Check-In Service. And you can relax in our airport lounge while we handle all your pre-departure arrangements. Keep on lounging in flight on really roomy seats with ample legroom in wide-bodied aircraft. We guarantee you'll experience First Class service down to the last detail. Choose from a selection of 15 international films on your Personalized Video System. All these First Class comforts at Business class fares.

Crown

ROYAL JORDANIAN
Reflecting the Change



Our Say...

Talking sense at the UN

UN GENERAL Assembly sessions are usually treated in a ritualistic fashion. Everyone goes through the motions of formality, without taking the whole thing very seriously.

On Monday, however, it turned out to be different. Two speeches made a lot of sense and a lot of impact. More importantly, they were delivered by the presidents of two countries which have been at loggerheads with each other, at the diplomatic and ideological level, for a very long time.

US President Bill Clinton and Iranian President Mohammed Khatami touched on highly relevant and burning issues, and both of them stated, each in his own way, that differences need not necessarily lead to conflict. They agreed that there were universal principles capable of binding the whole of mankind together.

Clinton took a surprisingly articulate stand on one of the key issues doing the academic rounds in the US and elsewhere. He refuted roundly Harvard University's Samuel Huntington's thesis articulated in his now famous book, "The Clash of Civilizations." In the book, Huntington argued that the fault-line between civilizations was based on religious differences, and specifically implied that the major clash was between the Western and Islamic civilizations.

It appeared that after the end of the Cold War, the Americans were looking for new enemies, and found one in the Islamic bloc. Yet, Clinton cleared the air by stating directly that there is no conflict between Islam and the West, and acknowledged that—not for the first time—the six million Muslims in the US are part of the country's cultural fabric. He rightly pointed out that those people who call Muslims 'false prophets', are misusing religion to spread hatred and death. He emphasized the need for every one to join in the fight against terrorism, irrespective of religion, ideology and country.

Khatami talked about the absolute necessity of freedom for the development of human beings. It was a strong rebuttal of Western criticism that Islamic societies do not recognize the value of freedom. Khatami left no one in doubt that freedom is as much a keystone of the Islamic world, as it is in the modern West. He also talked about the need for a civil society, where families and women play a key role. Once again, he called for a dialogue of civilizations. Of course, he referred directly to the plight of the Palestinians and was quite sharp in his criticism of the militant Taliban in Afghanistan.

It was heartening to hear Clinton and Khatami dwell on important ideas and ideals, because for years now we have felt that in a post-ideological world, there was an intellectual vacuum—especially in the political sphere.



An Indonesian Chinese boy looks at a Marine in a predominantly ethnic-Chinese area in central Jakarta. Ethnic Chinese were targeted for their perceived support of the downfall of long-serving President Suharto. (A)

The Islamic World challenges the 21st century

By Star Staff Writer

TAKE A look at the current situations in the Islamic world, and you will find many aspects of a great civilization at the center of which is a vast population of over one billion. It represents a quarter of the world's population.

Intellectuals and academics are today busily thinking of ways to preserve the precious inheritance of Islam into the 21st century.

Mohammed Amara, a prominent Islamic thinker, says the Muslim world must guard itself against the "total cultural and economic invasion of the Western civilization against Arab and Islamic values."

In his lecture at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation last week, Dr Amara spoke of the coming challenges for the whole Arab and Islamic worlds into the 21st century.

Before we spoke about the challenges, Dr Amara says, we must talk about the present situation of the Muslim world, "which is poor in displaying its political thinking and ways of dealing with the current state of affairs. We need now," adds Dr Amara, "to examine closely in our abilities before speaking of our future."

The Islamic world has already many spiritual, cultural and economic prospects which are vital for the next century. "Islamic civilization will never die," stresses Dr Amara. "We possess in our lands a great stock of oil and minerals." This is something that will keep giving the West the opportunity to exploit our lands.

Although the Islamic world spreads over 30 million square kilometers, it still can't develop its own economy. In contrast, Dr Amara says, China has developed its economy by tremendous rates. Its economic growth increases by 13 percent every year despite its smaller geographical area.

He points out that western civilization was much brighter at the beginning of the 20th century than it is today. At that time

Ottoman empire and the Sykes-Picot agreement.

But even today "people think Muslim blood is cheap," says Dr Amara. As testimony to that is the wars in Palestine, Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Amara says that this onslaught actually strengthens the Muslim world, and pointed out that it would put it in good stead for the challenges of the 21 century.



Amara

The philosopher says that states have gone and went, and great powers have been defeated. The dramatic changes of the late 20th century have resulted in domination, hegemony and globalization.

He says that the first of these challenges resulted in what he called the "psychological defeat" which he says is the "most dangerous for our ability to act and because of our social values."

On the regional level, Amara suggests "there is a devilish struggle going on in

the Arab world between Islamic and secular trends that are a divisive rather than a uniting force."

"The only way for people to face the challenge is to refresh their memories and hold onto the sacred values of their religion," he said that Zionism have come to dominate the Middle East precisely because the Arab states are disintegrated.

"The second challenge that faces the Arab world," Amara says, "is globalization."

"There is a big difference between globalization and multi-nationalism," he added. "Multi-nationalism means a world consisting of different civilizations that interact easily, but don't lose their identity."

"Globalization," adds Dr Amara, "is a western methodology to dominate the world's economy and culture. With this kind of monopoly, we will be in a straight-jacket and unable to choose freely." He said that "Arabs were used to the 'old and slightly decent' type of imperialism by the French and English occupiers, but we will never get used to the American 'cowboy' version, where the use of force rules."

Dr Amara called on the Islamic world to unite its forces as one economic and political bloc, which can preserve and carry on its own philosophy to the next century. He also urged the creation of an Islamic development fund that would replace bailing to deal with the International Monetary Fund.

"Islam is not against regionalism, but should be united in their thoughts and interactions," he maintained.

The third and last challenge is Zionism, and its relationship with the western countries. "Jews are perfect actors, and can succeed in making compromises by drawing us away from the central issue," Dr Amara concluded.

He finished by saying that "Our struggle with the Jews is a civilized one, where competition requires an advanced science and technology along with exporting our goods to the world."

Action against Iraq is high on Albright's agenda

By John M. Goshko

UNITED NATIONS—When Secretary of State Madeleine Albright comes to the UN General Assembly this week, high on her agenda will be Washington's quest for international support for the next round of opposition to what it calls the continuing threat posed by Iraq's defiance of the United Nations, according to the LA Times-Washington Post.

However, unless Baghdad makes some new, catastrophic error, Washington will find few allies for its view that UN members should be prepared to take drastic measures, including the use of force, to compel Iraq to comply with Security Council resolutions.

If Iraq maintains its path of confrontation, many diplomats here agree, the United States almost certainly will face a choice of going it alone in using force or reverting to a containment policy that is likely to weaken backing over time for the economic embargo that is the principal UN weapon against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime.

Albright will be handicapped in appealing for a tough and united international stance because of confusion and doubt about the US commitment to its long campaign against Iraq. Spurring this uncertainty was the US reaction to Iraq's 3 August announcement that it was ceasing cooperation with efforts by UN inspectors to search for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

As recently as last February, the United States had responded to such provocations by threatening massive military retaliation. This time, though, Washington remained conspicuously silent about the imminent use of force, while denying for more than a month that this silence signaled any change in the US approach to Iraq.

In recent days, the Clinton administration has revised its explanations. It insists that its goals—eliminating Iraq's prohibited weapons and maintaining tough sanctions—remain unchanged. But it acknowledges international divisions about the best way to deal with Iraq. The United States has elected to concentrate not on threats of air and missile attacks but on winning over the fragmented 15-nation Security Council. "We are moving in a very deliberate way to build support and to make it clear that what Saddam Hussein is doing is unacceptable and that Security Council resolutions have to be enforced," Martin S. Indyk, assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs, told the House International Relations Committee on Tuesday.

Asserting that the administration has not abandoned the "Should it become clear that the Security Council is not prepared

to live up to its obligations in this regard, then we will have a free hand to act."

But Indyk also acknowledged what everyone at the United Nations knows but administration officials previously had been reluctant to admit publicly.

"Today, outside the United States, not a single country in the world is calling for the use of force to respond to Saddam Hussein's latest refusal to cooperate with (UN inspections)," he said. "Not a single country in the world is now calling for the use of force to deal with Saddam Hussein's current blatant violation of Security Council resolutions."

Indyk then gave a frank accounting of the reasons. Other countries, including Iraq's neighbors, don't feel threatened by Baghdad's weapons; Arab governments fear that backing the United States against Iraq will expose them to the wrath of their populations; other nations are suffering "fatigue with the whole issue and would prefer it to go away."

These same factors are cited by UN diplomats and bureaucrats to explain that while some countries would like to see Iraq cooperate with council resolutions—and would maintain sanctions that cause hardships for millions of Iraqis—there are sharp limits on how far these countries are willing to go, and military action stands well outside these boundaries.

Correctly or not, the working assumption among most delegations at the United Nations is that the Clinton administration also has lost its zeal for a shooting war with Iraq. Diplomats here cite the White House's preoccupation with the scandal and its supposed reluctance to expose American forces to harm before the upcoming US congressional elections as good reasons for supposing that the administration also has been overtaken by "fatigue" with the Iraq issue.

Most countries are delighted by what they perceive as the more-pacific American attitude, and they are eager to do what they can to encourage it. That diplomatic sources say, was a major factor in the Security Council's action last week in suspending the council's practice of reviewing the sanctions every 60 days.

Now they will be kept automatically in place as long as Iraq refuses to cooperate with weapons inspections.

In his testimony, Indyk hailed that as a sign that the American effort to build support is succeeding. And Iraq appeared to back him up by threatening to end its remaining vestiges of cooperation on inspections if the council does not rescind its action. Diplomatic sources here note, though, that since Iraq clearly is defying the world body, even its sympathizers on the Security Council would be



(From the archives) Picture of UN inspection team in Iraq

unable to justify lifting the sanctions if they had continued to come up for periodic review. The reality, these sources say, is that the vote to suspend the reviews was partly to encourage the United States to continue its measured approach.

In fact, an emphasis on gradual measures currently distinguishes all UN activity involving Iraq. Much of it clearly is designed to put off a confrontation while the United States and those major powers that advocate a more-flexible approach to Iraq—Russia, France and China—are locked in a seemingly unbreakable stalemate about what to do next.

The focus now is on a proposal by Secretary General Kofi Annan for the Security Council and Iraq to engage in a "comprehensive review" of their relations: in hope that this might provide a way out of the impasse. The council endorsed the idea provided that Iraq stops blocking inspections, and Annan is soliciting views about what the review should cover.

Sources familiar with these talks say Iraq's sympathizers want the review to focus on the possibility of easing sanctions in exchange for Iraqi cooperation. The United States insists on including such issues as human-rights abuses and such unresolved issues from Iraq's 1990 occupation of neighboring Kuwait as the fate of missing

Kuwaiti prisoners of war and the restoration of stolen Kuwaiti property. Even if these differences are resolved, a comprehensive review is unlikely any time soon because the council has specified that it can take place only after Iraq has complied with its obligations, and there is no indication that Iraq has any intention of doing that.

The most likely outcome is that the United States will have to choose between striking at Iraq on its own or folding its hand and deciding that sanctions are the practical limit of how far it can go in containing Saddam Hussein.

Over time, that is likely to work in Iraq's favor because those countries sympathetic to Baghdad could be expected eventually to break the embargo, and the United Nations would be powerless to stop them.

Indyk, echoing earlier statements by Albright, indicated in his testimony that if the Security Council fails to act, there are what he called "serious consequences" for Iraq.

But Rep. Lee H. Hamilton, the ranking Democrat on the committee and usually a supporter of the administration, noted the domestic and foreign uncertainty about US intentions, and added: "There are those who might say that that's an empty threat."

Middle East Beat

by Khairi Janbek

Candidly from Amman

IF WE take things from the perspective of flattery, we should be flattered that the actions of Jordan are always under the microscope both regionally and internationally. We have always known as Jordanians, that our country has a respectable international standing, and regionally, it is an important player serving as a haven for peace and stability.

Many have attempted to marginalize our role, but in effect, their actions are only affirm our international standing. Of course, it means that we have important responsibilities to fulfill, and standards to maintain, which cannot be swayed by a criticism here, or disinformation there.

Our principled position regarding regional issues and international problems has always been clear and unambiguous, and we have stood by our commitments irrespective of the consequences, and regardless of the costs. Our history indicates that we have participated in all the historical moments important to the Arab World.

We have always responded positively to the suggestions of our Arab and Muslim brothers in every forum. From HM King Hussein's leadership, we have learned confidence in the sanctity of the larger Arab cause, and from the guidance of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, we have learned the moderate expression of our Islamic faith.

Therefore neither as a leadership, nor as a people, are we given to conspiracies and alliances that "burn or damage the" interests of "our brothers and neighbors. Our country has suffered from conspiracies throughout its recent history, yet we have always responded with an extended arm of reconciliation, and hopes of coexistence. When the term "strategic alliance" was fashionable in our region, Jordan stood alone, trying to maintain its friendship with all brothers and friends alike. When all were tripping over themselves to form strategic partnerships, we stood hopeful, that such partnerships would serve the Islamic world in general and the Arab world in particular. Such partnerships, we know now, are rarely concerned with either, least of all Jordan's future and security.

Now that the whole international atmosphere has changed, and Jordan is at peace with Israel, we continue to believe that our peace treaty serves our brothers by bringing a just and comprehensive peace to the region. We do not hope to obtain favors from anyone, neither do we wish to upset anyone. We are not intimidated by our historical task.

Our strategic cooperation with Turkey, is not something new in terms of strategic cooperation in the region, for all our Arab brothers have a strategic partnership of one form or another, with one major power or another, irrespective of Turkey's stance vis-a-vis Israel.

Some of our brethren in the region are applauded and praised when they formulate such partnerships, but not Jordan. The campaigns of disinformation directed against us, will not distract us from continuing down our chosen path. We are a nation united in its hopes and aspirations; we are not a prey to any predator.

The time has come for all of us in the region to start viewing each other as equal partners. We are all responsible collectively for our common fate in the region. Let our associations compliment each other, and let our partnerships pave the way to a more homogeneous region.

Business scene

Overall revenues of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) were about JD 85,411,000 last year compared with JD 85,808,000 in 1996. These revenues include JD 71,207 million generated from external investments and JD 7,959 million from local investments.

Two million shares have been listed for the Orient Projects Company in the 'parallel market' of the Amman Stock Exchange. The monthly report of the Financial Market earlier, showed 'primary issues' amounting to JD 8.5 million were established by August.

The UN Sanctions Committee has approved 20 contracts with Jordanian companies at a cost of JD 34 million. This is in accordance with the fourth stage of the 'Oil for Food' deal between Iraq and the UN. Under the agreement, Jordan is allowed to export pharmaceuticals, soups, washing liquids, and fodder to Iraq.

Under the patronage of HRH Princess Rania Al Abdullah, the Middle East Conference for the 'Year 2000 problem' will be held between the 27-28 September. The purpose of the venue is to try and provide a solution to the 'Year 2000 problem' which is likely to affect many global companies.

The Al Hassan Industrial City (HIC) is ready to accept orders from investors, who wish take part in the new expansion of the city. Waleed Hijazi, director of HIC, said that the new project will cover an area of 344 dunums. He continued to say that there are already 56 industries currently working in the city, accounting for over JD 100 million, and employing over 3000 workers.

Abdul Wahab Za'bi, director general of the Jordanian Petroleum Refinery Company, said that there are more than 2.5 million cylinders currently in circulation in the country. He added that over 1000 cylinders are terminated every year, while another 6000 are repaired annually. In addition to this, he said that another 200,000 new cylinders will be imported over the next few weeks.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 23 September

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SP	0.4861	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEM	0.3667	0.3685
LY (100)	0.0419	0.0421

National conference calls for immediate action to eliminate unemployment

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

THE GOVERNMENT of Fayez Tarawneh knew that it's first task after taking office would be to tackle the problems facing the Jordanian economy—most importantly, the rising unemployment rate. Economic analysts have said that the cleverly selected Government, which contains many highly experienced economic technocrats, is up to the job.

The problem certainly seems to be high on the list of the new Government. In the space of one month, there have been two conferences aimed at rejuvenating the economy. There was the 1st Jordanian Business and Investment Conference, a couple of weeks ago, whose goal was to attract more foreign investment into the Kingdom, and just recently, there was the National Conference, aimed at combating unemployment and eradicating poverty.

Addressing around 300 participants from both the public and private sectors, HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, stressed that, "It is not the classifying and analyzing of the problem which matters, rather it is finding out relevant and substantial solutions based on the principle of partnership and cooperation among all sectors."

Both conferences were convened under the slogan "We are all partners," a fact that was emphasized by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, who reiterated that, "Every person without a job is a waste of energy, that could be invested for the interest of the country and the nation as a whole."

Regarding the ratio of unemployment in Jordan, the Prince reassured the Kingdom that the situation was not as bad as people expect. "We shouldn't view unemployment as a number, rather as a human problem, its political, social and economic dimensions. Unemployment can lead to poverty—a more troublesome factor, that can mean depriving the rights of citizens to live a decent life," the Regent pointed out.

The Prince also reminded the audience of His Majesty King Hussein's letter of designation, which urged all participants to abide by transparency and credibility when dealing with national issues. The Regent called on the conference to conclude with a unified formula, aimed at solving the economic problems facing the Kingdom, ensuring that the enhancement of investment, the organization of the labor market, and the development of educational, training, and rehabilitation programs to meet



(From left), Prime Minister Tarawneh, Prince Hassan, and Minister Omoush

the actual needs of the market, are all taken into account.

Participants in the three-day meeting, which opened last Sunday at Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel, stressed that there are many reasons for the current disappointing economic mood in the region. An amendment to the labor law was suggested, to provide incentives to the unemployed to take up the available vacancies. The delegates highlighted the influence of the "shame culture," and the absence of a proper educational plan for the future workforce.

Some academics taking part in the venue stressed that educational policies were in need of review, and that new strategies needed to be introduced to supply the labor market with the means to tackle the job in hand. Curbing the rising unemployment rate was the main concern for all the delegates, as it is a problem that affects every family in the Kingdom to some degree. Vocational training courses were sighted as a good means of preparing the future workforce for employment.

Referring to the conference, Dr. Bassam Omoush, the Minister for Administrative Development, said that, "The conference is a responsible scientific and democratic dialogue, targeted at highlighting the causes of unemployment, and finding out mechanisms to combat the problem and to look for the needs of the domestic market." Dr. Omoush, who also headed the conference's preparatory committee, pointed out to His Majesty the King's letter of designation to the newly formed government, which urged all parties to combine efforts to "properly invest human resources and to create new job opportunities for those left without jobs."

"This conference discusses the phenomenon from different angles including the impact of the society's structure, population growth and the limited resources and potentials, and the relationship between these factors and the rate of unemployment," Ms. Nancy Baker, general secretary of the Ministry for Administrative Development, told *The Star*. "About 14 working papers were discussed in the conference, aimed at formulating a draft strategy to combat unemployment," she added.

The Ministry of Industry also has a role in solving the problem. This was made clear by Mr. Abdul Hafeez Al Ajlouni, a participant from the Ministry who told *The Star* that, "The solution depends on the possibility of generating real and high growth figures." He added, "The Ministry has a role in pursuing the economic policies, supervising economic activities and suggesting legislative amendments that could contribute in creating a satisfactory environment for job growth." He referred to the experiment of Greater Amman Municipality as a model that should be followed in eliminating the concept of the 'shame culture.' "A few years ago, over 90 percent of the workers in the Municipality were non-Jordanians, but now this amount has been lowered to around 50 percent, which is encouraging for people and will help get rid of the so called 'shame culture,'" Mr. Ajlouni elaborated.

Official statistics put the unemployment rate at 14 or 15 percent, whereas the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS) has estimated the figure to be about 25 to 27 percent. "We admit that the problem of unemployment does exist, regardless of

opportunities. Dr. Shakhrah disagrees with this concept. "I think that this sector focuses on the profit it could get by employing workers who will accept low wages, neglecting the priority that must be given for Jordanian manpower, and this means that the labor laws need amending and that the labor market has to be reorganized," he added.

The role of women in tackling unemployment was recognized as well, and they were present in great numbers at the conference. Mrs. Afaf Khreis, coordinator for the National Federation for Jordanian Women, praised the conference for "being held under the slogan of 'we are all partners,' as there is a pressing need for a political decision to put an end to this problem, by spreading awareness among families to direct their children towards more practical fields." She also pointed out to the need for removing "routine and bureaucracy" obstacles that only serve to hinder investment.

All in all, the delegates agreed that the conference was a positive step in the right direction, although they reiterated that only through hard work and determination—not by miracles—will the problem of unemployment be solved.

which figure is right, but the basic information used by the CSS is completely different from we used at the General Statistics Department," Dr. Hussein Shakhrah, director of the Human Resources Directorate at the Ministry of Planning, told *The Star*.

Though some experts argue that the private sector can contribute in creating new job

Economic pessimism reigns among blue-collar workers

By Sebastian Rotella

SAO PAULO, Brazil—The mood among stockbrokers and executives in Brazil has oscillated along with the volatile stock markets. Yet among workers at the shuttered factories of Sao Paulo's industrial district, a smogstack metropolis within the world's third-largest city, the mood is not wavering. It is pessimistic.

Volkswagen, Ford and other automotive giants shut down temporarily last week in response to plunging consumer demand, giving 35,000 auto workers a 10-day paid furlough to contemplate a darkening horizon.

"It's going to be a nervous vacation," said Clarindo Ferreira, a quality-control inspector at a Volkswagen plant. "People are tense." Scrambling to counteract the loss of about \$26 billion because of capital flight, the government has been forced to raise interest rates, slash spending and prepare further austerity measures that will take an inevitable toll on working-class Brazilians—the great majority of a population of 160 million.

Unemployment is at its highest level of the decade and will keep rising, most analysts say. The middle-class is struggling with more debt and less credit.

This nation's remarkable four-year transformation has not eliminated its alarming inequality: 10 percent of Brazilians still control half the wealth, while one-quarter of the population still lives in desperate poverty. It has, however, pushed an estimated 10 million people out of poverty.

An expected period of belt-tightening and recession threatens to erase some of the gains of the anti-inflationary Real Plan instituted in 1994. Some of those who were lifted out of poverty are in danger of sliding back, said Marcelo Neri, an economist for the government's Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA).

"I am very worried," Neri said. "We are going to see a deterioration of poverty, of inequality."

Brazilian stock markets closed higher after a volatile week that opened with two days of gains followed by two days of losses. But well before repercussions of the Asian and Russian economic crises infected Brazilian stock exchanges last month, 1998 had been a hard year. Even among the poor, however, hard times have only helped President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's chances in the 4 October elections. Opinion polls show him increasing his lead over challenger Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva to a commanding 27 percent.

Da Silva, a former leader of the Metalworkers Union, criticizes the government's free-market orthodoxy. But voters blame generalized global turmoil rather than the president and are sticking with Cardoso, the acclaimed architect of the Real Plan, despite the bad economic

news. Ferreira and other auto workers fear that they will return from their furlough to an announcement of massive new firings. Many workers have put family plans—end-of-the-year vacations, purchases of cars and homes—on hold, said Ferreira, a Metalworkers Union organizer who has worked for Volkswagen for 22 years.

"We are bracing ourselves for what could happen," said Ferreira, 44, a muscular man with thick, curly hair and a bushy

month. The brothers see tangible signs of crisis every day. The size of the informal sales force has grown during the past year, they said. And sales have dropped noticeably, especially during the past month.

"The worst thing that could happen is if inflation comes back," Marcelo said. "That would really be bad."

Pro-government politicians and economists emphatically deny persistent rumors that Cardoso will risk a return of inflation and devalue the national currency, the real, if he wins reelection.

"It is ruled out," said Paulo Levy, director of macroeconomic studies at IPEA. "Because in the current international environment, with these capital flows that move so fast from one country to another, it's very difficult to say you can devalue only a certain amount."

A devaluation could trigger a catastrophe such as the "herd behavior" that broke out after Mexico devalued the peso in 1994, resulting in the Latin America-wide "tequila crisis," Levy added. He predicted that the Cardoso administration gradually will correct the exchange rate over the next few years.

If a devaluation could deal a death blow to the president's credibility, Cardoso has built his career on his triumph over hyperinflation, which Brazilians of all income levels have come to see as a demon of the past.

The government has announced \$6 billion in spending cuts and is expected to keep hacking away at a federal budget deficit that totals \$66 billion. The beleaguered health, education and social services that the poor depend on will suffer, analysts say. But some government officials do not believe that the austerity measures and economic slowdown will have especially drastic effects.

"The poor are going to stay pretty much the same," said Senator Artur da Távola, chief of the Cardoso campaign in Rio de Janeiro. "The lower-middle and middle class, who consumed more, will have difficulty acquiring consumer goods. But I think they are going to keep their kids in school, they will maintain their lives. I don't think things will get that much worse for them."

Auto worker Ferreira does not like any of the potential scenarios: devaluation, inflation, recession. He finds it hard to decipher the mentality of investors and speculators who lurch from euphoria one day to panic the next, endangering his livelihood in the process. But he said he understands the bottom line.

"This freedom that capital has to enter and leave the country without doing hardly anything, has made a few people rich and caused problems for the rest of us," Ferreira said.

LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

Business Chronicle

Unemployment under the microscope

SHOULD ANYONE think that problems—certainly, major problems like unemployment—can be solved by the stroke of a pen, then they are deeply mistaken. The recent National Conference, convened to tackle the unemployment problem in Jordan, should be made aware of this fact. This is not a criticism of the Ministry of Administrative Development, or of Dr. Bassam Omoush—whose great efforts are applauded—but it needs to be said.

In a former interview with *The Star*, Dr. Omoush said that if every company (there are 25,000 in the private sector) takes the initiative and offers just one vacancy, then about 25,000 new job opportunities will become available there and then. This, he suggested, would provide a partial solution to the problem of unemployment. Analysts say that there are many reasons behind the unemployment crisis, such as the low economic growth rate, the structure of the business community, and a lack of educational strategies and training priorities.

Any attempt to find a solution to the problem should take into account that half of the population in Jordan is still very young—a youthful community demands a non-stop effort to provide job opportunities. A full training program is necessary to help prepare non-qualified Jordanian workers to compete in the world market.

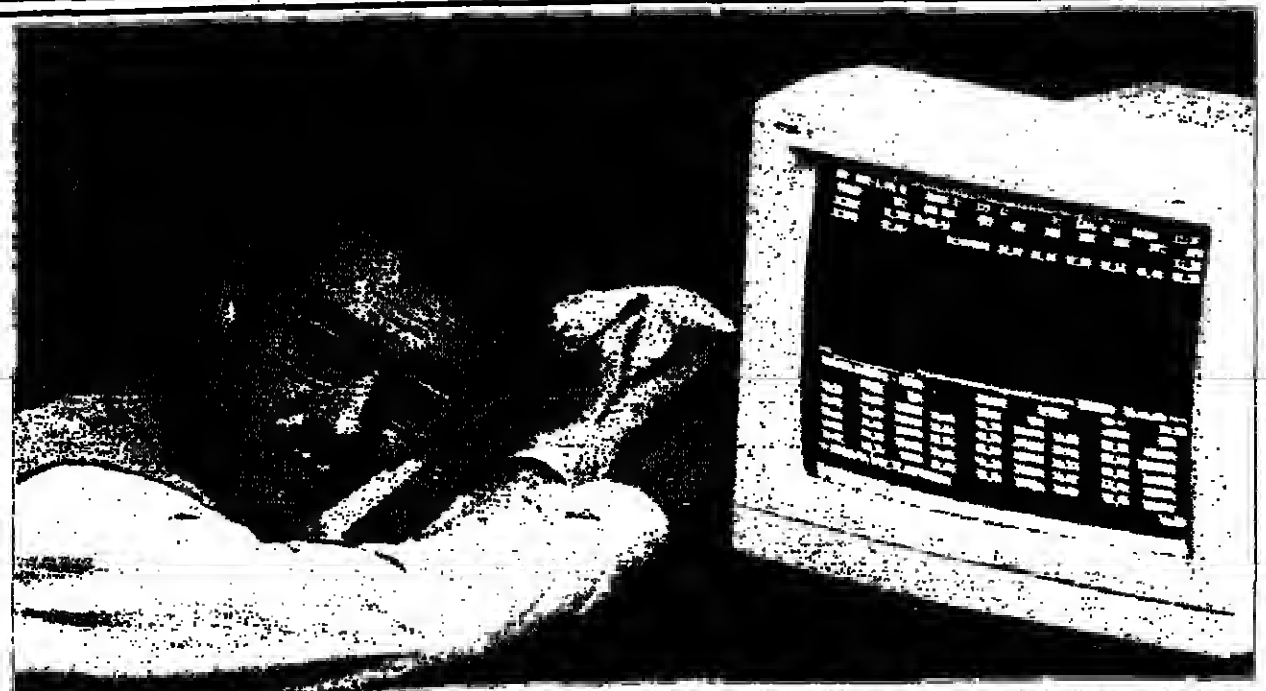
The first serious bid to discuss this problem, and one which needs real cooperation between all sectors in society—was the National Conference on unemployment. It aimed to outline the problem and to determine future policies. Cynics, those who see the glass as being half empty, say that the conference's decisions and recommendations will remain just ink on paper, as is the case with the majority of conferences today. Others say that the conference was a serious initiative, but that doesn't have a magic wand.

Despite all the talk, the man in the street remains sceptical. "Where are the job opportunities for the future graduates going to come from, or will they just be new statistics for the jobless rate," commented a taxi driver, whose brother holds a doctorate, but who has been looking for a job for the last two years.

One thing is for sure; the journey is going to be a long one. But what is important is that we have taken the very first step on that road, and the National Conference was that first step.



Workers face hard times



A trader enjoys a break on the floor of Sao Paulo Stock Exchange during the morning trading 21 September. The key BOVESPA was down four percent near midday due the turmoil in the Asia markets.

09.10.1998

Israeli roadblocks anger Palestinians

By Lee Hockstader

BEIT ULA, West Bank—Not long before her baby stopped breathing—before it was born on the way to the hospital and began turning blue in the back of the Peugeot station wagon—Fadwa Alam had a terrifying thought: What if the Israeli soldiers stopped her?

Impossible, she decided.

"We expected them to allow us to cross the checkpoint because I was pregnant and in labor," Alam said, her voice a numb, low monotone as she described the ordeal. "I mean, we had no doubt they'd let us pass. The hospital's just 10 minutes past the checkpoint."

She was mistaken. As Alam's contractions convulsed her in the back seat, the Israeli troops manning the roadblock outside Hebron yelled at the relatives accompanying her and refused to let their car pass, according to an account by Alam and her family that has not been disputed by Israeli authorities. By the time she reached the hospital more than an hour later, after driving half-way around the city to avoid Israeli roadblocks, it was too late. Her baby daughter, born on the side of the road outside a dusty village, was already dying.

To most Palestinians, Israeli roadblocks are a hassle and a humiliation, not a threat to life. Israel says its soldiers at checkpoints have standing orders to allow cars to pass in cases of humanitarian emergency, even when the authorities have declared a total closure of the occupied territories, as they did Friday during a security alert. In Alam's case, they insist the troops did not notice she was nine months pregnant.

Still, Alam's tragedy, while extreme, fits a larger pattern, according to Palestinians who encounter Israeli checkpoints regularly, as well as Arab and Israeli human rights advocates. They say checkpoints manned by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank have become one of the chief irritants in Palestinian-Israeli relations.

As a regular feature of life for tens of thousands of Palestinians, they mock the assertion that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu often makes to foreign audiences—that 98 percent of the Palestinian population lives under Palestinian civil control. In fact, Palestinian control often ends as soon as Palestinians try to go very far, human rights workers say.

"That's the big myth of Oslo"—the 1993 peace accord between Israel and the Palestinians—"that Israel no longer occupies the West Bank and Gaza," said Jessica Montell of the Israeli human rights group B'tselem. "Most Israelis fervently want to believe that they're no longer occupiers. But if (Palestinians) want to go

anywhere, they're going to encounter Israel."

Each of the more than 130,000 Palestinians who cross daily from the West Bank and Gaza Strip into Israel—usually for work—must pass through at least one of about 30 military checkpoints. In addition, Palestinians within the West Bank encounter roadblocks when Israel orders special curfews and closures in times of tension. A special curfew was in force last month in Hebron when Alam went into labor.

Nearly every Palestinian can recount having been hassled or abused at Israeli checkpoints, but the problem goes beyond bad blood. It's also bad for business. Since Palestinian entrepreneurs generally cannot get vehicles through the checkpoints, they are forced to hire Israeli-licensed trucks at far

higher prices.

"This increases our costs and creates big problems," said George Nasser, who runs a textile factory in Palestinian-controlled Bethlehem and relies on raw materials brought from Israel. "We cannot compete."

To the Israeli security services, whose members live in constant fear of attacks, checkpoints are a deterrent, not a matter of debate. Israel insists its forces have clear orders to accommodate genuine humanitarian emergencies, and generally ambulances and other emergency vehicles are allowed to pass through roadblocks.

Israeli military spokesmen acknowledge occasional departures from this policy. Nevertheless, they say, the object of

roadblocks is not to win the hearts and minds of Palestinians, but to win the war against terrorism.

They cite instances in which terrorists have tried to sneak past Israeli checkpoints by disguising themselves as women or claiming medical emergencies. In January 1995 a suicide bomber who posed as a blind man entered Israeli territory and detonated the explosives he carried near the Israeli coastal city of Netanya. Twenty-two Israelis died, nearly all of them soldiers, and 60 were injured.

"If the Palestinian Authority had done something to prevent terror acts against Israelis, we would not have to be in this situation at all," said Brig Gen Itzhak Eitan, military commander for the West Bank. "When you use terror, people

suffer. Of course terror does not recognize who is the good guy and who is the bad guy. Simple people sometimes suffer because of it."

In response to the death of Alam's newborn infant, the Israeli army issued a statement that sounded like an apology: The soldiers had used poor judgment, it said, acknowledging that the troops had strict orders governing humanitarian emergencies and promising to investigate the incident. The army added parenthetically that it was impossible to ascertain whether the baby had died because of the delay in getting to the hospital.

Yet the incident, which took place August 25, wasn't the first time an Arab child had died after being delayed en route to a hospital by Israeli troops. Only three days earlier, a three-month-old baby, vomiting and running a high fever, died in his mother's arms in Hebron. Shirin Hadad, the child's mother, begged Israeli soldiers to allow her to walk to a taxi stand just up the street from her house so she could go to the hospital. The soldiers refused, citing a neighborhood curfew imposed after a Jewish settler was murdered in the city, according to Hadad and her father, who owns an electrical appliance store. "They were loud, nervous and shouting at me," Hadad said.

After nearly an hour of pleading, Hadad finally slipped away, walking through a vineyard to elude the soldiers. She felt her tiny son Qusay, the youngest of triplets, weakening in her arms. What would have been a 10-minute trip to the hospital took an hour and 40 minutes. When she finally arrived, doctors in the emergency ward could not revive the infant.

Hours later, Israeli troops again stopped Hadad, this time on her way to bury Qusay in the Muslim cemetery. The family was forced to bury the baby in a private plot.

Colonel Baruch Nagar, head of Israel's civil administration in Hebron, called on Hadad a few days later to ask about the circumstances and express the army's condolences, according to Hadad's account, which was confirmed by army officials. The colonel offered Hadad's husband a permit to work in Israel, which he declined. But officials say they cannot find the troops or police who detained Hadad the day her baby died.

"We're trying to locate these policemen or soldiers but it's very hard," said Shlomo Dror, spokesman for the Israeli authorities in the occupied territories.



Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat (R), stands next to US Middle East envoy Dennis Ross as they make remarks on the progress of the Middle East peace talks while standing under a large poster of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat outside PNA offices in Ramallah. Erekat asked Arafat to be relieved of his post as top Palestinian negotiator, steering negotiations on a further withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank, a process that has been stalled for the last 18 months. Arafat rejected Erekat's resignation 23 September.

Surging population crowds Gaza schools



By Lee Hockstader

JABALYA REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza—Imagine being Ahmad Mousa, chief of elementary schools in Gaza's astonishingly overcrowded refugee camps.

When schools opened last year, he had to cope with 10,000 additional students. This year, he must find room for 11,000 more. Next year, the school system is expected to grow by another 12,000 pupils, according to the LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

Yet with the number of students increasing at a rate of 6 or 7 percent a year, Mousa's budget has grown by just 2 percent in the last two years.

"We're using administrative offices for classrooms and shipping containers for administrative offices," said Mousa, a veteran official of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, which runs most of Gaza's elementary schools. "We're short on buildings, short on hiring additional teachers, short on books and short on furniture."

The social and political earthquake that gave birth to contemporary Gaza was Israel's war and occupation of Palestine in 1948. Some 250,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled from their homes and sought refuge in Gaza. The refugees thought their stay would be brief—a few months, maybe a year. But today they remain in Gaza, and together with their children and grandchildren comprise

one of the world's fastest-growing populations.

Jabalya is the largest of Gaza's camps, but the word "camp" doesn't do justice to the jumble that Jabalya has become. In its shadeless streets, children sputter out of alleyways, dart between cars, seethe and eddy along the curbs.

More than half of Jabalya's 100,000 people aren't old enough to shave or menstruate, and a good portion have no shoes. A decade ago, it was Jabalya youths who started the intifada—the Palestinian uprising against Israel.

Israeli troops have since pulled out of most of Gaza, leaving it under the control of the "Palestinian" Authority. Gaza's population continues to expand at a rate of nearly 5 percent a year, the product of a conservative Islamic society that frowns on birth control and attaches prestige to large families—as well as a potboiler that larger families will help build the Palestinian nation.

That has left just about every resource here—clinics, water and power supplies, recreational facilities and especially schools—impossibly overcrowded.

In Gaza's refugee camps, 170 schools are jammed into 109 school buildings. That is accomplished by holding classes for one school's pupils in the morning, then sending them home to make room for the next school in the afternoon. Next year, Mousa said, triple shifts may be necessary in Jabalya and other neighborhoods.

In Jabalya, where schools are most crowded, 55 students are crammed into every classroom.

Eight of the 11 schools in the camp were built in the early 1950s, when the refugees still believed they would return home soon and no one expected the buildings would have to last more than a few years.

These schools are run by the United Nations, but there is no sign they enjoy much priority. There are no computers, no overhead projectors and, in most schools, no radiators to keep classrooms warm in the winter. The crude desks have been scarred by two generations of pupils; some teachers can recognize the carvings they made on desktops as pupils 30 years ago.

Despite the crowding, in some ways life has improved in Gaza over the last half-century. Public health standards are vastly improved. Many fewer infants or mothers die in childbirth, and the elderly live longer than ever. But the effects of crowding have overwhelmed the schools.

"Kids become violent and aggressive because of crowding," said Halil Halani, headmaster of a Jabalya boys school. "Teachers can't control them in such big classes."

In addition, conjunctivitis and other infections spread like wildfire. Last April, Halani said, 225 of his school's 600 pupils were absent one day with skin infections. Intestinal infections run rampant.

"We're educating kids in very, very critical circumstances," he said.

Bin Laden aide denies link to embassy bombings

By William Drozdiak

BERLIN—A top lieutenant of Osama bin Laden—who was arrested in Germany last week—has acknowledged he knows the Saudi expatriate, but denied he had any connection with the bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. German law-enforcement

officials last week.

The officials said they were anticipating a request from the United States to extradite Mahmud Salim, 40, who carried a Sudanese passport and is suspected of being a leading figure in Bin Laden's financial and terrorist operations. He was arrested last Wednesday while visiting a

friend near Freising, a town in the southern state of Bavaria.

Guenter Beckstein, the Bavarian state interior minister, told reporters he would like to see Salim transported to New York, where he has been indicted under a sealed warrant, as quickly as possible. He expressed concern about German security interests while

holding Salim in custody, and said he feared that legal formalities to approve the extradition could take up to several weeks.

While there was no evidence that Salim planned to carry out any criminal activities in Germany, Beckstein said the arrest was made by a special anti-terrorist police unit, at the behest of US authorities, who suspected Salim of being a leading weapons procurer and financial accountant for Bin Laden.

"The basis for the arrest is an arrest warrant from a US court (in New York) on charges of conspiring to murder citizens of the United States and conspiring to use weapons of mass destruction," Bavarian Justice Minister Hermann Lieb said.

The United States has accused Bin Laden of orchestrating the attacks on its embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam last month that killed 263 people and injured thousands of others. US authorities have mounted a worldwide investigation into Bin Laden's terror network and are working to track down suspects linked to the bombings. Bin Laden, believed to be hiding in Afghanistan, has denied any involvement in the attacks.

German police said they were tipped off by US authorities that a senior member of Bin Laden's group would be traveling from Sudan to Ger-

many. They arrested Salim—who gave his place of birth as Khartoum, the Sudanese capital—shortly after he arrived last week from Spain. He carried a plane ticket that showed he was planning to continue his journey to Turkey "within a short time," police said.

"Investigations led to the conclusion that this was indeed someone who belongs to the closest leadership circle around Osama bin Laden," Beckstein said. "He says he has nothing to do with Bin Laden's operations. But he has said he knows Bin Laden."

Salim told investigators that he planned to buy 20 used cars during his brief stay in Germany, but he was not found to be carrying a large amount of money.

Beckstein said Germany recently escalated surveillance of Islamic fundamentalists, whose influence has been growing among the country's 3 million Muslims, most of whom are Turks. He said information gleaned from such surveillance drew attention to Salim and was passed on to US authorities, who confirmed he was a leading member of Bin Laden's organization and should be taken into custody.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Ben Laden gives his views



Pakistani employees of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) chant anti-government slogans outside parliament house in Islamabad September 22. Some 2,500 workers were protesting against the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif which is privatising various sections of the WAPDA.

Naji Al Ali

Martyrdom for a patriotic artist

By Ghassan Joha
Special to The Star

"We are all in need of him, to search into our bodies, to seek our survival and, for sure, to pursue our love."

(Nadra Sour, Arab poet)

TODAY, PEOPLE still consider the death of the Palestinian caricaturist Naji Al Ali as the greatest loss to the Arab world. He is still widely remembered as one of the most influential commentators on the Palestinian issue.

Al Ali was assassinated in London on 29 August 1987. Many believe that his assassination was deliberate because of the way he portrayed the Arab political situation in his cartoons. His works influenced all kinds of people, who used to wait impatiently every morning to see his drawings on the last page of many Arab dailies.

Every cartoon that Al Ali drew, featured his famous hand-made character—the bare-foot little boy 'Hanthalah' who turned his back to the world—became a trademark throughout his long career. The idea came to Al Ali when he was working in Kuwait during the early 1960s. "I created this character to symbolize my lost childhood," said Al Ali, to a reporter once.

But Hanthalah was much more than that. Admirers of Al Ali say he drew the character to represent his frustration with the Arab world.

Born in 'Al Shajarah' village near Nazareth in 1937, he was a victim of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. His family were forced to leave the Ain Hawra refugee camp in south Lebanon, at the

age of 10. His artistic career began in Lebanon during the late 1950s, when the late Palestinian novelist Ghassan Kanafani—who owned a magazine in Lebanon—published two of Al Ali's cartoons.

tinian revolution by all the means at his disposal.

Al Ali was originally trained as a mechanic, but his first love was always drawing, which led him to a one-year art course at the Lebanese Art Academy. It wasn't until later, when he worked as a journalist in Kuwait, that Al Ali entered the risky road of politics. He first worked as an editor, reporter, and even as a secretary, at *Al Tale'oh* weekly magazine.

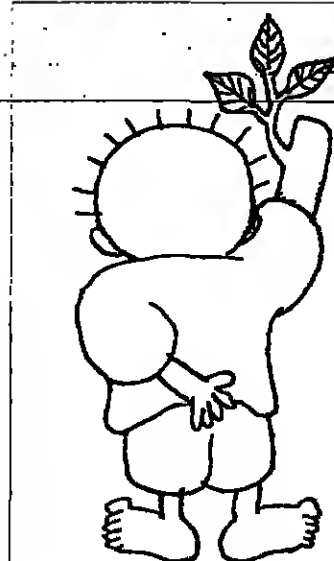
"I was able there to express my feelings and thoughts through the medium of cartoons," Al Ali said.

He often defined himself as a realist, one aligned to his social class—the poor and hardworking. This point of view was apparent in the majority of his cartoons. "The poor people are those who suffer, are sentenced to jail, and die without shedding tears," Al Ali once said.

Later on, he returned to the old camp in south Lebanon, and found work with *Al Saefer* newspaper, but he was dismayed at the change in attitudes.

"When I left the camp, everyone beld clearly to the idea of liberating the whole of Palestine, but on my return, I found that people were content with liberating less than half of it," Al Ali was once quoted. He thought that the pursuit of money was responsible for the change in principles.

During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Al Ali was forced to leave his home again, but this time on ships filled with hundreds of Palestinian fighters. After several years of displacement, Al Ali finally settled back in Kuwait, where he found work with the prominent Arab daily, *Al Qabas*. It was



here that Al Ali dedicated all his energies into highlighting the Palestinian people's feelings and sufferings.

However, the cartoonist soon encountered resistance from certain political pressure groups, and was forced to move to Al Qabas' branch in London. It was his last move before his death in 1987.

Many writers and poets have paid tributes to Al Ali and his works. Prominent Arab poet Mahmoud Darwish said, "The death of

Al Ali was yet another classic crime—committed by a talented enemy—that mortally wounded our morals and sacred values, and those of the future generations as well."

Jalal Rifai, however, has a more personal tribute, after having met Al Ali in Dubai, in early 1983. "He used only simple lines and traces to depict his sarcastic ideas and thoughts onto paper. His works and thoughts were impressive, unusual and impossible to imitate," Rifai, a well-

known Jordanian cartoonist, said. Radwa Ashour, the prominent Egyptian female novelist, once said, "He was, and still is today, an idol for humanity. His works will always be reproduced in the Arab world, and I hope and pray that another person like him comes along."

In 1992, Al Ali's cult status reached its highest point following an Arabic motion picture about his life, entitled 'Naji Al Ali'. The movie—with Egyptian actor Noor El-Sharif characterizing Al Ali—gained widespread admiration and respect from around the Arab world.

We all remember Naji Al Ali as a man who loved Palestine (his homeland), Lebanon (where he grew up), and finally Kuwait (where he gave birth to 'Hanthalah'). Yet, he was more than this; he was a man who loved the whole of the Arab World. ■

Space age telephony comes on line—but who will use it?

By Mukul Sharma

KHORTU VILLAGE, INDIA — On September 23, space age telephony comes of age, riding on a network of 66 satellites and enabling anyone, anywhere on the planet to access state-of-the-art digital telephony.

Iridium, the American company behind the service, has spent five billion dollars and taken over a decade to get to this point, and the public type has surrounded its pre-launch promotional blitz. "One World, One Number" is how Iridium describes the service, which aims to provide wire-free communications to remote parts of the world and to those who can afford it—make mobile telephony far easier (their telephone number do not change as the callers move about—hence the catchphrase).

"Over the years huge sums of money have been dedicated to the task of bringing dialtone service to remote and rural regions of developing countries with only varying degrees of success," Edward Staiano, chief executive officer of Iridium, told government representatives from developing countries at a telecommunications conference in Malta in March.

"Soon a major barrier to these efforts—the cost of building expensive ground-based infrastructure—will be erased," he added. "This new technology will link rural and remote areas to the world's communications system and it's as simple as distributing telephones—no wires, and no expensive ground-based infrastructure."

But costs remain a potential hurdle. Iridium is targeting developing countries as one of its prime markets, but its telephones will not come cheap. Each handset—being manufactured by Motorola, which owns 25 percent of Iridium—will cost around \$3,000 and calls probably around three dollars a minute. That could rule out the poorest, unless governments step in.

Iridium expects the main users of the service to be travelling professionals, industries and perhaps governments, but it has also developed a "National Ownership, Global Access and Disaster Communications" programme aimed at wooing poor countries.

Developing countries will be able to share the ownership of our company, a

generous number of phones and discounted air time minutes so they can immediately establish affordable telephone services where none now exist," says Staiano. "Iridium will give free handsets and air time for relief and civil defense agencies to use in dealing with emergencies."

Such claims are yet to impress the people of Khortu, an impoverished village in Bihar—itsself one of the poorest provinces of India.

Few in Khortu have heard of Iridium despite the existence of Iridium India Private Limited (IITL), comprising government-owned finance and leasing companies. The Indian government has also invested \$32 million on Iridium Inc., the US-based company, to acquire rights to provide the service in India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Clearly, such a service can benefit the people of Khortu and other such villages. For Khortu, at the moment, is under water. That is so every monsoon, but this year the embankments of the Kosi river gave way and the waters submerged the entire village up to roof-level.

"Floods are not new for us. What is new is that this time there was no warning at all from the district administration," said one Khortu resident.

The district administration and the government officer responsible for the village, R.K. Negi, lay the blame in part on continuous heavy rains and a breakdown of communication systems—roads, bridges and telephones, lines.

"We were unable to give any warning to the areas because of the total collapse of the communication systems. If there is any new telephone service which is coming into this country then it should also definitely come to these hundreds of villages which live between life and death," Negi says.

Telecommunications links have been steadily improving in Darbhanga District, which includes Khortu. The number of exchanges has grown from 83 to 120 in the last few years and total connections in the district have crossed the 24,000 mark. All have been converted into electronic exchanges, with direct-dialling facilities.

"But 78 percent of the lines cater only to towns," says H.S. Dwivedi, the district officer for telecommunications. Like some others in Khortu, Dwivedi is sceptical of the Iridium scheme.

"Who will provide this service to the villages? Dwivedi asks. "Who will be able to buy it? Even mobile telephones are unheard of in these villages. Forget mobile phones, the government has been unable to provide even one telephone connection in many villages."

"And what is this new technology, which surely will come in an expensive package, making it inaccessible for most people in villages?"

Some argue the new service could even create problems.

Deepak Bhatti of the Lok Shakti Sangathan (Peoples Power Organization), a group working among the poorest in Darbhanga district, says: "We are fighting against the rich landlords who have grabbed thousands of acres of land, as well as against the criminal gangs which have mushroomed in this locality."

Panos



Cyclists stand next to a banner advising restricted areas to motorists of cars in the first such one-day experiment, September 22. Thirty-five French cities banned cars from downtown areas giving pedestrians and cyclists a puff of fresh air. The banner on left reads: "What if we lived in Paris without cars on Tuesday September 22."

By David Hoffman

MOSCOW—An offspring of Russia's troubled market economy died last week. *Russky Telegraf*, a daily business newspaper aimed at Moscow's small but expanding professional class, fell victim to the financial breakdown that it had chronicled day after day on the front page.

The newspaper was only a year old, but its demise was another worrisome sign for Russia's mass media, which were freed from Soviet authoritarianism only to fall into the clutches of Russian oligarchic capitalism. *Russky Telegraf* was a child of the age of the Russian tycoons, and it expired along

with the good times.

Since Russia devalued the ruble a month ago, many other newspapers and broadcast outlets have been facing difficult, new financial burdens. They have been laying off journalists, delaying salaries, and reducing pages.

Leonid Zlotin, the bearded editor of *Russky Telegraf*, bade farewell to his staff of reporters, most in their 20s, by saying it was not their fault. "Everyone understands we have been closed not because it was a bad newspaper, but because of the financial crisis," he said.

Russky Telegraf, a broadsheet that carried stock indexes above its masthead and devoted its front page to Russia's ever-rolling world of finance and

politics, was founded last year as part of the empire of Vladimir Potanin, one of the leading Russian industrialists, known as the oligarchs.

In recent weeks, Potanin, along with the other oligarchs, has run into hard times, with large debt payments he cannot meet. He had sunk nearly \$10 million into *Russky Telegraf* since it was founded, Zlotin said, but could go no further, and decided to preserve a better-known newspaper, the venerable *Izvestia*, part of which Potanin bought in partnership with Lukoil, Russia's biggest oil company. About half of *Russky Telegraf's* 60 journalists are to join *Izvestia*.

In the last years of the Soviet Union, the news media enjoyed a budding independence that now seems to many to have been a romantic era. Journalists participated in the rediscovery of hidden truths that helped bring down the Soviet Union. This new-found independence lasted into the wild capitalism of the early 1990s, but soon the newspapers, radio and television channels found themselves without capital, and became easy prey for the wealthy financiers.

Potanin was part of the tight circle of barons who helped elect Yeltsin in 1996, a campaign in which many journalists openly threw in their hats for Yeltsin against the Communist Party candidate. It also marked, for many, the beginning of a new, darker age in which money ruled.

A common practice in the election was to "buy" favorable coverage by bribing underpaid journalists.

Almost every one of the major financiers and business magnates jumped into the news media business, which they considered vital for defending their empires. Vladimir Gusinsky of Media-Most, and Boris Berezovsky of Logovaz,

invested heavily in television, and controlled two of Russia's largest channels, as well as small Moscow daily newspapers.

In Moscow, allies of Yuri Luzhkov, the ambitious, pug-nacious mayor, established a television channel loyal to him, as were many newspapers. The oil and gas companies Lukoil and Gazprom sank cash into media groups, too. *Izvestia*, a *Kommersant* Smolensky gave credits to start a pioneering business newspaper, *Kommersant Daily*.

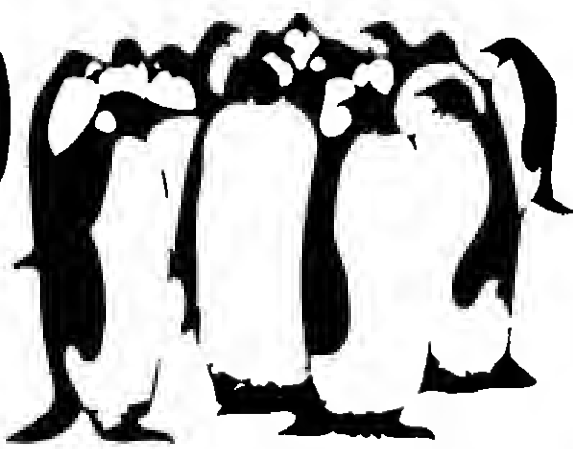
Potanin was a latecomer. In the summer of 1997, he had been in a messy brawl with Gusinsky and Berezovsky over the privatization of a state-owned telephone company. In September, *Russky Telegraf* was born.

The newspaper had a view from the boardroom rather than the street. Zlotin called it "respectable," and when asked what he was most proud of, he recalled the summer's strikes by unpaid coal miners who blocked the Trans-Siberian railroad. While television highlighted the coal miners' protests, he said, the attitude of *Russky Telegraf* was that keeping the railroads open was more important to the economy than the miners' complaints.

Some of the biggest names in Russian journalism were hired away—especially from *Kommersant*—at unheard-of salaries, to work at *Russky Telegraf*. But at the newspaper's denouement, the big paychecks had been cut, and cut again.

The newspaper never stepped on Potanin's toes. "It would be strange if I denied this," said Zlotin. "Please tell me, if you come to a bar and somebody gives you a glass of whiskey, will you punch the guy after you have drunk his glass of whiskey? So, we were not considering it." ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

AROUND
TOWN

Win a holiday in London at the terrace!

MR OMAR SHAHIN and Mr Wahab Al Awamleh were the lucky winners of the weekend trips to London! The two gentlemen won a British Airways Ticket (Amman-London-Amman), in addition to free weekend accommodation in London at an Inter-Continental Hotel and The Forum Hotel.

The draw took place Monday 14th September 1998 at THE TERRACE, in the Hotel Inter-Continental (Jordan), and was part of the summer Terrace promotion organised by Hotel Inter-Continental, in cooperation with British Airways.

Mr Saad Jaber, Sales Manager for British Airways (Jordan) attended the draw together with Mr Tareq Nasser, Sales Manager for Hotel Inter-Continental (Jordan).

A feminist trilogy

Paintings about women, paintings for women

By Kniffi Attah
Special to The Star

OUR CENTURY has seen history's most creative and significant achievements, and one of these is the emergence of women in the arts. Although they are never far from the fields dominated by men, they normally have to face more constraints and even discrimination.

Art is a great medium for women to send their message across. Their incisive constructions are introduced in colors, paintings and designs. Bahija, Iman and Layla's works are personal letters to themselves and other Iraqi and Arabian women. Their art trilogy now showing at the Buran Gallery is an attempt to recreate the world. If men are not ready

to remake the world, then women like these are striving to do so in the arts.

The 70 paintings hanging at the gallery vibrate reds, yellows, oranges and blues. The colors used number as many as the sand on the seashore, but they have been simplified by their reduction to one shade that is intersected by other contrasting colors. The three artists combine the influence of the past and present, as seen by the role of Iraqi women and their interaction between the then and the now.

Bahija Al Hakim's 27 pieces hang gloriously in the gallery. Her paintings are neither simple nor complicated. She paints using all designs. Her works involve hands, eyes and birds. One of her works contains a woman, a flower

and a bird. "The flower is my sweet daughter, she is the source of my inspiration," she explains.

The hands and eyes are the symbol of an old Arabian belief that anyone with evil intentions will be prevented from entering into your abode once the symbol is painted at the door or the gate of the house. The bird represents the Babylonian times. Her work is deeply rooted into Iraqi and Arabian heritage and interwoven with present thoughts.

Many art works are often condemned as meaningless. However, Al Hakim's pieces radiate conversation, revisiting the epoch they represent. They take us through the reality of life, and the repressed feelings which are often inside women.

This is also the feeling one gets with the second painter, Iman Al Karim. Her pieces are traditional but with modern touches. Sentimental in approach, they are echoes of the era of the 'Arabian nights.' In all



Iman Al Karim

another work of two lovers, a princely looking young man and an attractive woman. The main message is to show the world how important and indispensable the woman is.

The works of Layla Saleem are different from the others. She concentrates on space, wind and land. The painter is in a permanent search for the truth. Her research produces some results. If the whole truth is not found, then at least we find pieces that reflect images of it. Even though the images are not claimed, but left opened to individual interpretation, the clues and questions are there to guide us in the right direction.

Layla's 25 pieces on display are based on a personal challenge, a woman in search of truth, the source of life and the wonders of nature. It stems from an inherent belief in the importance of building bridges between the various aspects of nature and life. Layla's inner visions are at first stored for days, months, even years, then they are painted to the world.

"It's a true challenge to myself and woman-kind," she declares. "I am still researching," she added.

All three artists have different

approaches to their works. Nevertheless, the compatibility is teasingly hidden, and is only discovered when we proceed along the gallery floor.

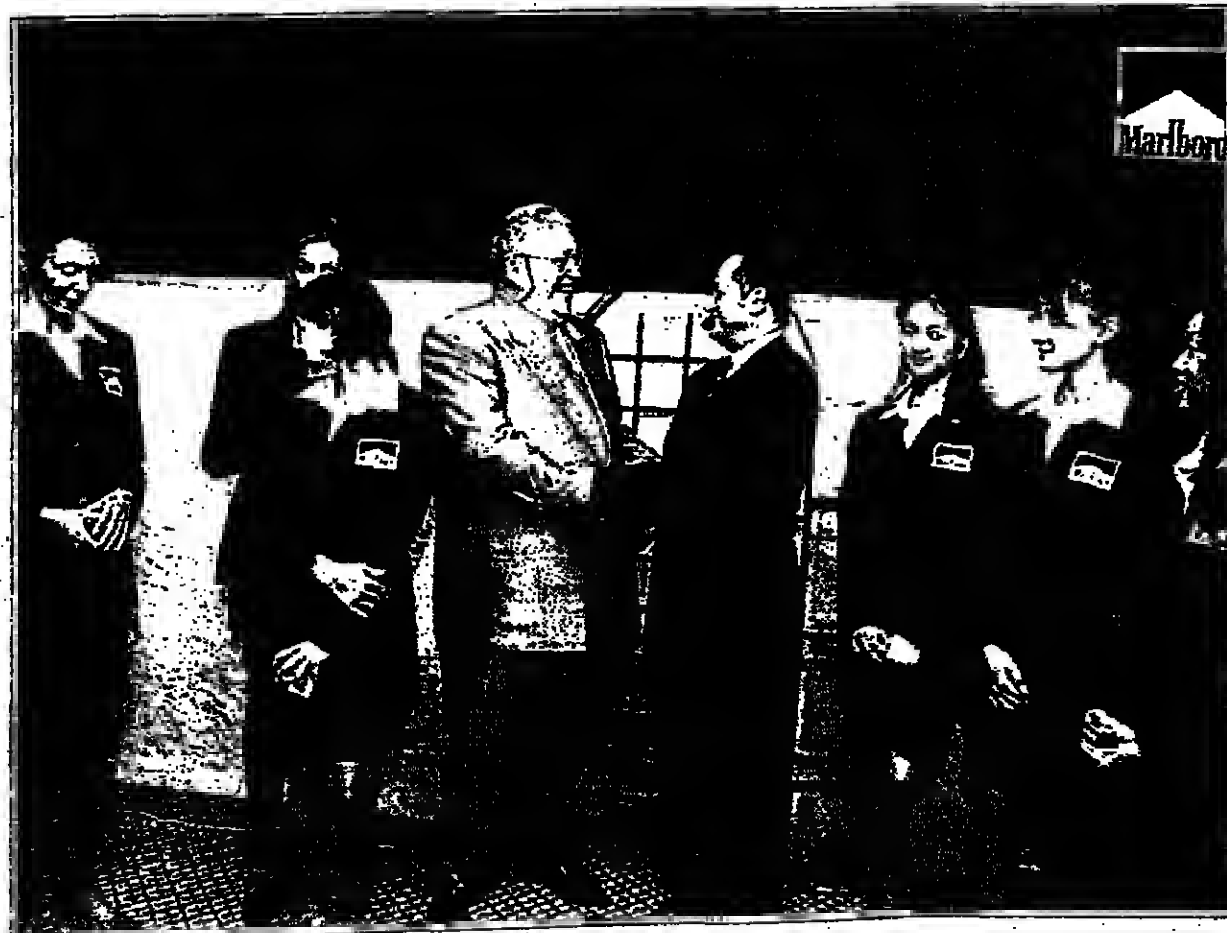
The most important message of this triple art exhibition is that women can be as innovative as men. They have proved to us that art can only be art if it creates a new order. The exhibition will continue until Tuesday, 28 September.



Layla Saleem



Iman Al Karim



Made in the USA

On the occasion of the launch of Marlboro in Jordan, Philip Morris (The manufacturer of Marlboro) organized a reception at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel.

The reception was attended by members of the Ministry of Supply, Jordan, and the Ministry of Finance, Jordan, as well as members of the press.

The invited were warmly welcomed by the American (Area Manager), Raymond K. Smith, and the Jordanian (Area Manager), Ahmed Abou Foteh.

During the reception, a formal agreement was signed between Philip Morris and the Jordanian Tobacco Co., that will import and distribute Marlboro cigarettes in Jordan.

He added that this agreement will ensure that the Jordanian consumer will always have access to the highest quality of Marlboro cigarettes.

Despite the heavy competition in the market, Marlboro will be available to the Jordanian consumer at a price of JD 1.200 per pack of 20 cigarettes.

This partnership between Philip Morris and the Jordanian Tobacco Co. is expected to contribute to the Jordanian economy.

It is important to note that Philip Morris Inc. is the world's largest manufacturer of cigarettes and largest beer manufacturer in the world.

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Paintings by 18 artists from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon at the Al Mashriq Gallery, Shmesani. It continues until 1 November.

■ An art exhibition by Rola Shukairy at the French Cultural Center dealing with the phenomenon of light as one of the most important issues of life ends on 30 September.

■ Genevieve Hofman made a survey for French artists and their sites in Paris, as the 20th century goes by. Starting on 9 September, her exhibition of 69 photographs and artworks will be shown at the Jordan's Plastic Artists' Association in Jebel Weibdeh. It runs until 30 September.

■ The Solidarity exhibition by Palestinian artist Maklouf and Indian painter, Alnoor Mitha continues at the National Gallery of Fine Arts until

3 October.

■ A joint exhibition for Arab artists continues at the Hamorabi Gallery until 15 October.

■ The Summer '98 exhibition continues at Darat Al Funun. This is an annual exhibition of arts and graphics from different Arab artists. Besides the art exhibit, there are many art lectures almost everyday.

■ More than 120 works of Jordanian and Arab artists are currently on display at the Fakhr Al Nisa Zeid Gallery in the Ministry of Culture.

Lectures

■ A lecture by Marc Laverne, about Jordan and its inhabitation, will be presented at the French Cultural Center on the 29 September. Mr Laverne is an oriental and social researcher at the National Center for Scientific Research at the University of Tours, France.

Europe - USA - Canada - Australia: US\$ 150.

The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Adgasi

Pan-Arab Games update

Pan Arab Games for the handicapped

The Council of Ministers and Mr. Sultan Al Hassan, the Minister of Youth, approved a budget of JD150,000 in order to host the first Pan Arab Games for the handicapped. The handicapped games will take place a week after the official closing ceremony of the Pan Arab Games in September 1999, and will include competitions in athletics, basketball, weightlifting, table tennis and football.

Mens Handball team on track

The Jordanian Men's Handball team is ready to participate in the Arab Handball Cup to be held in Egypt this week. The team played several games over the last two weeks, against Syria and Iraq, and in each game they were a significant improvement in the Jordanian performance. Jordan played two matches against Syria, losing the first 31-32, and tying the second 24-24. Jordan then played the Iraqi team three times, and came out winners in the final match.

After the Arab Cup has taken place, the Jordanian

team will be heading for a training camp in Yugoslavia, to continue their preparations for the next Pan Arab Games.

Good luck to the football team



Mazen Anbar

The Jordanian Football team will be participating in the Arab Football Federation Cup in Qatar, starting this week. Their recent training camp in Egypt revealed some alarming shortfalls in the squad. The Jordanian team played several Egyptian club sides during their preparations. They lost to Al Shamas (1-3) and to Al Ahli (1-4), but managed to beat Kafr Al Sheikh and an Egyptian military team. Fokasheem, Jordan's Yugoslavian football coach, called up Al Hussein striker, Mazen Anbar, to strengthen the squad. What's surprising is the absence of Jordan's striker Jerius Tadrus, who has now recovered from injury. It was his decisive goal that gave Jordan the Pan Arab Games title last year in Beirut.

Volleyball team disappoints

The Jordanian Men's Volleyball team performed badly during the 10th Arab Volleyball Championship held in Bahrain last week. Jordan lost all five matches, against teams from Algeria, Tunisia, Bahrain, Qatar and Kuwait. Except for the match against Qatar, Jordan lost all the games in three straight sets. Another Cuban coach is expected to be appointed soon, to put the team into some sort of shape before the next Pan Arab Games. The Star hopes that the new coach's abilities will be scrutinized prior to his appointment, to ensure that the team acquires the basic volleyball skills and tactics before the next games. More competitions are needed as well, to test the skills of the Jordanian players.



The Al Jazeera U-16 Basketball Team in jubilant mood, after clinching the National U-16 title following their victory over Al Orthodoxi

Tennis-experience carries Spain to fifth Fed Cup

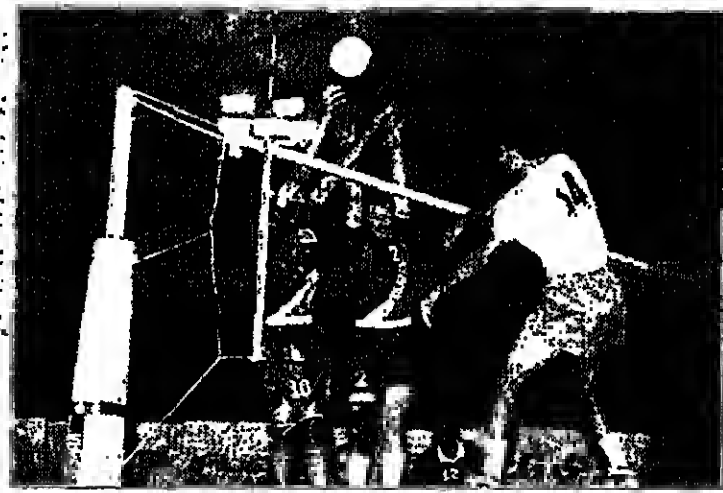
GENEVA—Experience triumphed over youth last week as Fed Cup veterans Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario and Conchita Martinez led Spain to their fifth title. Sanchez-Vicario and Martinez, who have been at the centre of every successful Spanish campaign since 1989, destroyed world number one Martina Hingis and Patty Schnyder (6-0, 6-2) in the decisive doubles of the final. "I think that was the one of the best doubles matches we ever played," said Sanchez-Vicario, the world number four. "There were moments when we were down, but we always got back up. Everything was against us, they had the home court, the crowd and the world number one. We had to work harder so the Cup was worth more to us," she said. Spain have played in eight

finals since first winning the title in 1989, but this was Switzerland's first final. Hingis, who struggled with leg cramps during her singles victory over Sanchez-Vicario, and Schnyder, exhausted after a three-hour singles defeat by Martinez, had nothing left to offer the sold-out home crowd of 12,000, as their Spanish opponents raced through the first set in just 24 minutes. Sanchez-Vicario and Martinez, now winners of 17 of 20 Fed Cup doubles matches (including their last eight), showed their experience in the second set, refusing to give Hingis and Schnyder an opening to get back into the match. "It's hard coming back on the court after sitting around for nearly four hours and after a long match against Arantxa," said Hingis, winner of all four Grand Slam doubles this season. "It was disappointing losing at home, but Spain were a better team this time."

Hingis had beaten Martinez in straight sets and defeated Sanchez-Vicario, the French Open champion, on Sunday (7-6 (7-5) 6-3) to put the home country ahead, 2-1, for the first time. But Schnyder was unable to repeat her heroics of the semifinal against France, when she won both her singles. She lost in three sets to Sanchez-Vicario on Saturday, and fell to Martinez (3-6 6-2 7-9) in a pulsating struggle on Sunday. When Martinez's job fell in for the winning point in the doubles, Schnyder burst into tears, while the Spaniards and their supporters, including International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch, celebrated wildly. It was the first time since 1991

when Spain beat the United States, that the Fed Cup has been decided by doubles. After two hard-hitting singles matches there was some question as to who would be strong enough for the final match. The grueling day began with Hingis overcoming leg cramps that required a lengthy court-side massage to beat a determined Sanchez-Vicario. Later, Martinez hobbled by blisters for much of her three-hour 15 minute marathon with Schnyder, grimly hung on to record a (6-3 2-6 9-7) win and force the tie to the doubles. "The problem was my foot, but I always take my foot," said Martinez, playing down the injury. The loss was a bitter disappointment to the Swiss, who failed to cap their unprecedented climb to the top of women's tennis with a title.

Toiling in the Fed Cup minor leagues just two years ago, Switzerland became the first country to come from outside the World Group and go directly to play for the crown. It might have also been Switzerland's last chance at the title for some time with Hingis blinding all week that she may not play Fed Cup anymore. In the post-match press conference Hingis refused to confirm her plans, but she has made it clear that she is not happy about the current Fed Cup format. "I don't want to talk about next year right now," she said. "I've won the Italian Open in May. We've had a great year this year, getting to the final and who knows what's going to happen next year. I haven't made any decisions," Hingis said.



Jordan's defense was not enough to stop Algeria

Italian Series A match reports

Inter Milan (1) Piacenza (0)
Inter owed their first victory of the season as much to Gianluca Pagliuca as to Ronaldo's second-half penalty. Twice the keeper saved brilliantly, from Massimo Rastelli and a 25-metre Giovanni Stroppa freekick. Inter missed several chances but finally broke through in the 65th when Stefano Sacchetti pulled down Andrea Pirlu and Ronaldo converted the spotkick.

Bologna (1) Udinese (3)
Russian Igor Simutenkov's penalty miss seven minutes from time halted a brave comeback from Bologna, who trailed at half-time to two goals from Brazilian Amoroso and played the entire second-half with 10 men after Amedeo Mangone's dismissal. The home side pulled a goal back through Igor Kolyvanov's 62nd minute spotkick but Simutenkov placed a second too close to Luigi Turci. A minute later, Belgium Johan Walem followed-up his midweek UEFA Cup equaliser against Bayern Leverkusen with Udinese's third.

Empoli (0) AS Roma (0)
Luigi Di Biagio's nightmare penalty miss, which cost Italy their World Cup quarter-final with France, came back to haunt him at Empoli when he saw his late spotkick well-saved by Matteo Sereni. The midfielder's mistake cost the visitors a share of the first division lead.

Juventus (1) Cagliari (0)
Filippo Inzaghi took just eight minutes to follow-up his superb overhead goal in Juve's midweek Champions League draw with Galatasaray with his first league goal of the season. Alessio Tacchinardi caught Cagliari's defence square with a through ball and Inzaghi raced through to beat Alessio Scarp. Afterwards coach Marcello Lippi welcomed the return from injury of Uruguayan Paolo Montero to the centre of a defence which had conceded five goals in its previous two matches.

Lazio (0) Bari (0)
Lazio's expensively assembled side are still without a win after two league matches. Italy centre-forward Christian Vieri single-handedly laid siege to the Bari goal with three shots in the opening 10 minutes. Bari keeper Francesco Mancini, a former Lazio player, did well to stop Stissa Milajovic's 24th minute freekick.

Salermitana (1) AC Milan (2)
AC Milan survived some stiff Salernitana pressure in the first-half to keep up their 100 percent start to the season. Marco Di Vaio for the home side and Andres Guglielminetto, for Milan, both hit the bar in the first-half. In the 67th, Oliver Bierhoff headed home Demetrio Albertini's freekick and, in the 86th, Leonardo added a fortuitous second. Roberto Breda pulled a goal back with two minutes remaining.

Sampdoria (1) Perugia (1)
Vincenzo Montella's second-half penalty miss cost Samp a match they dominated. Inspired by their Argentine playmaker Daniel Ortega, they threatened to over-run the Serie A newcomers for the first 45 minutes.

with Francesco Palmieri hitting the post from 25 metres and France's Pierre Laigle putting them one-up in the 21st. But Perugia took a point with a fierce 48th minute freekick from Renato Olive.

Venezia (0) Parma (0)
Parma's much-vaunted strikeforce has yet to score in three official matches. Colombian Faustino Asprilla wasted a clear opening in the fifth minute, but the game's best chances fell to the Venetian side's Stefano Schwoch. In the 12th, Schwoch was clean through but shot straight at Gianluigi Buffon, and, in the 49th, he failed to control a pass with the goal at his mercy.

Vicenza (1) Fiorentina (2)
Giovanni Trapattoni's side survived a fierce second-half comeback from Vicenza after Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta's second goal in two matches in the first minute had put them ahead. Christian Schwenk levelled the scores in the 68th, only for Belgian Luis Oliveira to edge the visitors in front again four minutes later. Pasquale Luiso looked to have equalised in the 80th but was ruled off-side.

French 1st Division match reports

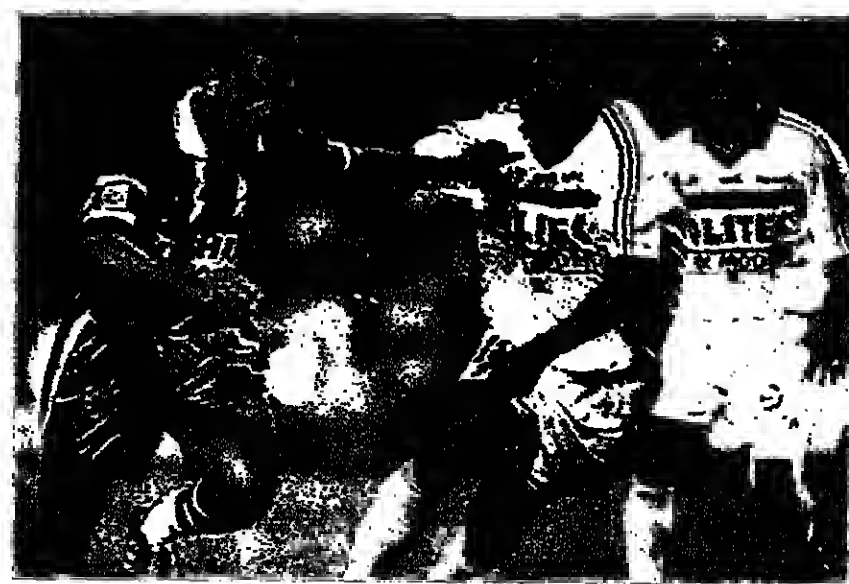
Olympique Marseille (2) Girondins Bordeaux (2)
Bordeaux clung to their unbeaten record with an injury-time equaliser by striker Kaba Diawara, who had put them ahead in the 42nd minute. Marseille, who should have won on chances created, equalised a minute later through Italy's Fabrizio Ravanelli, who also set up Eric Roy for their second goal in the 56th minute.

Paris St Germain (1) Monaco (0)
Nigeria's Augustine Okocha pulled back a cross from the goal line that was blasted into the net from close to the penalty spot by midfielder Yann Lachuer in the 14th minute. PSG, who had two days' less rest from their midweek European match, spent most of the match on the defensive and had Bernard Lama to thank for some good saves as Monaco lost their unbeaten record.

Le Havre (0) Strasbourg (1)
Strasbourg snatched their first victory of the season in injury time. Defender Edwin Okpara hit the post with a hard drive and former Olympique Marseille midfielder Olivier Echouafni followed up to shoot the ball home off the inside of the same upright.

Metz (0) Toulouse (0)
Last season's runners-up Metz continued their dismal form by going a sixth league game without scoring. After having a goal disallowed for the third time this season in the first half, Toulouse goalkeeper Teddy Richert saved a second-half penalty by striker Bruno Rodriguez.

Rennes (2) Bastia (0)
Rennes, who scored both goals in the



Action from the Nancy versus Montpellier match

first half, were down to 10 men for the last 15 minutes after defender Yousef Rossi was sent off for a second bookable offence. Fabrice Fernandes opened the scoring with a free kick from out on the right and Burundi international Shabani Nonda hit the second inside the near post from the left.

Nantes (1) Lorient (1)
Nantes conceded their first goal and dropped their first point at home to a promoted Lorient side who have impressed away with a draw at Lens and victory at Paris St Germain. Veteran striker Ali Bouafia put Lorient ahead in the ninth minute and Christophe Le Roux equalised with a dubious penalty five minutes before half-time.

Montpellier (1) Nancy (1)
Montpellier announced before the match that their four-goal Ivorian Ibrahim Bakayoko would probably sign for Everton of England in the coming hours. They fell behind to a ninth-minute strike by Soufiane Kone, equalising when Bakayoko was awarded a penalty three minutes into first-half injury time, converted by Xavier Gravelaine.

Olympique Lyon (3) RC Lens (1)
Lyon strikers Marco Grassi and Alain Cavaglia took their tally to four goals each with one apiece in the first half, both laid on by France under-21 midfielder Vilkhos Dhorasoo. Winger Wagneur Eliot shook Lyon by pulling one back for the champions, but substitute Joseph-Désiré Job scored a cheeky third for them two minutes from time.

Spanish 1st Division results
Real Madrid (2) Barcelona (2)

English Premier League match reports

Arsenal (3) Manchester United (0)
Champions Arsenal put United to the sword. The home side went 1-0 up after 13 minutes when Tony Adams beat Jaap Stam to head home Stephen Hughes' free-kick. United's David Beckham hit the inside of a post, but Frenchman Nicolas Anelka fired in Arsenal's second in the 44th minute after United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel blocked his initial effort. United midfielder Nicky Butt was sent off for the second game running after 51 minutes for bringing down Patrick Vieira as he burst through on goal. Arsenal's new Swedish signing Fredrik Ljungberg lobbed the third on his debut after 84 minutes.

Coventry City (1) Newcastle United (5)
Newcastle recorded their third successive win at the expense of hapless Coventry, who went ahead after four minutes with a Noel Whelan header. Greek Nicos Dabizas equalised (1-1) and England captain Alan Shearer fired Rudd Gullit's side ahead after 42 minutes. A minute later Gary Speed made it 3-1 and second half efforts from Stephen Glass (58) and Shearer (90) completed the rout.

Derby County (2) Leicester City (0)

Derby dominated against their Midlands rivals, with Stefan Schmeier scoring the opening goal and his first for the club after 34 minutes. Costa Rican Paulo Wanchope profited from poor City defending to make it 2-0 six minutes into the second half.

Leeds United (0) Aston Villa (0)
Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and Ian Harte, with two long range efforts, went close as Leeds dominated for long periods. Ian Taylor wasted a clear chance for league leaders Villa after the interval and Julian Joachim fired wide when given a clear sight of goal by Robert Molenar's mistake late on.

Liverpool (3) Charlton (3)
Liverpool's Robbie Fowler returned after seven months out injured to partner Michael Owen but Charlton grabbed a shock lead through Richard Rufus after 24 minutes. Fowler levelled from the penalty spot (3-3) when Owen was pulled down but Clive Mendonca put the visitors back in front after 61 minutes. Patrick Berger smashed in Liverpool's second (6-7) and Fowler, from close in, made it 3-2 with eight minutes left. Within 60 seconds, Charlton substitute Steve Jones volleyed a superb equaliser.

Middlesbrough (2) Everton (2)
Colombian Hamilton Ricard (27, 35) scored twice for the second league game in succession as Middlesbrough went in 2-0 up at half-time. But Everton roared back after the break, with a Michael Ball penalty (4-6) and a John Collins drive (4-8) salvaging a point.

Nottingham Forest (0) West Ham (0)
Veteran goalkeeper Dave Beasant produced a fine save to deny West Ham's Ian Wright in the first half, pushing Wright's shot on to the bar, in a match of few chances. Forest substitute, Dougie Freedman shot wide when clean through late on.

Southampton (1) Tottenham Hotspur (1)
Ruel Fox turned to fire Tottenham ahead against the bar as the visitors dominated. But Matt Le Tissier earned bottom club Southampton their first point of the season with a 64th-minute equaliser.

Wimbledon (2) Sheffield Wednesday (1)
Jason Euell scored at the start of each half to give Wimbledon the points. The striker scored from 18 metres after just 52 seconds and then volleyed a second after 50. Italian Paolo Di Canio, criticised by his manager for his attitude in midweek, pulled one back for Wednesday after 84 minutes.

German 1st Division match reports

Bayern Munich (5) Hamburg SV (3)
Iranian striker Ali Daei and midfielder Stefan Effenberg scored two goals each for Bayern, who recorded their fifth win in as many matches. Brazilian Giovane Elber gave

the leaders a fifth goal with one minute left. Hamburg SV goalkeeper Hans-Joerg Butt scored his second goal this season from the penalty spot in the 69th minute. Ghanaian striker Tony Yeboah and midfielder Martin Groth also scored for the visitors, in the 22nd and 74th minutes respectively.

MSV Duisburg (2) Borussia Mönchengladbach (2)
Each side scored an own goal in a close battle. Duisburg's Martin Schneider in the ninth minute and Borussia's Torsten Wohlen five minutes from the end to make it 2-1 after Austrian striker Toni Polster had levelled the scores from the penalty spot in the 69th minute. Midfielder Stefan Emmerling salvaged a draw for the home side in the dying moments.

VfL Wolfsburg (2) Werder Bremen (4)
Two goals from midfielder Marco Bode helped Werder Bremen score their first win of the season. Defender Dieter Frey, who opened the scoring for the visitors, was sent off for a second bookable offence with a few seconds remaining.

Bayer Leverkusen (3) Borussia Dortmund (1)
Leverkusen moved in front with a header by Croatian midfielder Nico Kovac in the 34th minute and took a 2-0 lead when Borussia Dortmund libero Wolfgang Feiersinger, under pressure from Markus Happe, put the ball into his own net three minutes into the second half. Dutch striker Erik Meijer notched Leverkusen's third goal with a header in the 56th minute. Dortmund reduced the arrears with a free kick by midfielder Andreas Moeller in the 75th.

VfL Bochum (1) Schalke 04 (2)
Each side had a man sent off in a tense Ruhr Valley derby. Schalke lost Dutch striker Youni Mulder, who received his marching orders for a nasty tackle in the seventh minute. Bochum midfielder Maurizio Gaudino followed him out after committing a similar foul in the 34th minute. The Gelsenkirchen club went 1-0 down after defender Torsten Kracht scored for Bochum just after the break but fought back with two goals from Dutch striker Rene Eijkelkamp.

Nuremberg (1) Kaiserslautern (1)
Nuremberg, yet to lose since rejoining the top flight, opened the scoring in the 39th minute through Czech striker Pavel Kulka, who joined them from Kaiserslautern this season. Striker Olaf Marschall levelled for Kaiserslautern with five minutes remaining.

VfB Stuttgart (0) TSV 1860 Munich (1)
TSV 1860 Munich Dutch libero Gerald Vandenbrouck scored the winner with a powerful shot from 25 metres in the 67th minute.

Hertha Berlin (5) Eintracht Frankfurt (1)
Striker Michael Preetz scored twice, in the 27th and 55th minute, to help Hertha Berlin score their third win in as many home matches. Cameroon striker Alphonse Tchamei sealed Hertha's win with nine minutes left. Frankfurt moved in front in the 13th minute through Chinese striker Yang Chen. They were reduced to 10 men in the 63rd minute when midfielder Thomas Sobottzik was sent off for elbowing Preetz.

THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

Computer & IT companies !:

Welcome to The Star's Workstation, the absolute source on what's hot and what's not in Jordan's IT market. email us at Star@NETS.com.jo or star1@go.com.jo with your news and views.

His Majesty The King's Web Site is launched: Extending a warm welcome to the world

By Zeid Nasser
Special to The Star
IT'S OFFICIAL. The site of His Majesty King Hussein I of Jordan is launched.

This is the first, comprehensive site of its kind and represents a first for an Arab monarch. It reflects the deep understanding and appreciation that His Majesty has for modern technology and the importance of conveying Jordan's history and modern reality to all parts of the world.

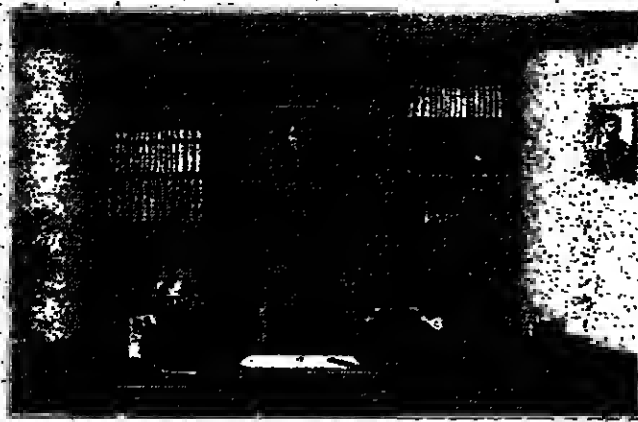
It is reported that the site witnessed huge traffic in the first few days following its launch, with over 400,000 visitors in around four days.

It is expected that the number of visitors will break the million mark by the end of its first week on-line.

Such is the great enthusiasm that the site has generated worldwide and locally. What makes it stand out, technically, is that it is concept-based, offering harmonious presentations.

The home page includes a welcoming message written by His Majesty the King. Among his words are the following:

"It is our sincere hope that you gain from your visit here a better understanding of Jordan."



and that this may contribute in some way to a better future for us all.

The site includes an impressive graphic representation of His Majesty's office, allowing Internet users to browse through the office and click on items to explore the different aspects of information.

The main four headlines of the site are: King Hussein I, The Hashemites, Jordan, and The Library.

Under the heading of King Hussein I, users can browse through sub-headings including: biography, views on selected subjects, calendar of monthly events, a day in the life of His Majesty King Hussein.

Other sub-headings include a photo bank, video and audio clips of His Majesty's events in the life of His Majesty, Royal Court and Royal Palaces.

The interactivity offered, and skilled programming that went into the site's development, make visiting it such an enjoyable and informative experience.

To generate further interactivity, the site includes feedback forms.

The site is a source of pride for Jordanians at home and abroad. The amount of information and data is huge. The Royal Court made a massive effort to introduce the site, in cooperation with the Business Optimization Consultants (BOC).

Commenting on the size of information available, an official at BOC said that, "this site is the most comprehensive resource on Jordan available on the Internet".

The site is currently undergoing further development, with certain sections coming soon. To visit His Majesty's Web site on the Internet, go to: www.kinghussein.gov.jo

ViewSonic presents its latest LCD and CRT Monitors, and LCD Projectors

VIEWSONIC HAS launched a new class of space-efficient monitors now available to users, thanks to technological advances that have shortened the CRT to reduce monitor depth. This means desktop space is maximized without compromising big screen functionality and performance.

With a maximum vertical frequency of 180Hz, 0.25mm dot pitch and a rock-steady refresh rate of 88Hz at a recommended resolution of 1,280 x 1,024, the PS790 is perfect for professional CAD/CAM and architectural CAE.

Recently launched into the market, the ViewSonic VPA150 ViewPanel is a highly specified 15" multimedia flat panel display with built-in stereo speakers. It has been specially designed for professional environments where space is at a premium, such as financial institutions, medical and research facilities.

The VPA 150 ViewPanel, like all ViewSonic's space-



saving LCD monitors, is built to the same high specifications.

Key features include ViewSonic's LuCID technology, which uses an active matrix LCD to produce sharp, brilliant images and wide viewing angles. Also, the monitors incorporate On View and ViewMatch controls, which ensure that the printer output matches the rich ViewPanel images.

Added to these, all ViewSonic's multimedia LCD monitors include integrated speak-

ers. PerfectPortrait software and adjustable screens that enable the user to switch easily between landscape and portrait mode. ViewSonic has expanded its Presentation Series of Office Theater projectors with the addition of the PJ1000 and PJ820. When it comes to presentation, visuals are a vital tool in communicating a message simply and effectively.

The PJ1000 is capable of a 1,024 x 768 XGA resolution and 1,280 x 1,024 SXGA compressed resolution.

Weighing less than 10kg, ViewSonic's PJ820 projector is highly transportable.

And a bright image is guaranteed with its palette of 16.7 million color and 750 ANSI lumens. Furthermore, its Advanced Optical Prism Uniformity System gives evenly saturated image and color uniformity from edge to edge. It also includes an RGB-out and Audio-out loop for enhanced connectivity with auxiliary devices.

New dial-enhancements for 3600 and 2600 Series Routers: Cisco serves network managers & ISPs

CISCO SYSTEMS has added several new enhancements to the Cisco 3600 and 2600 series of modular access routers that lower the cost of remote access for network managers and Internet service providers (ISPs).

Two new modules with integrated analog modems offer solutions that scale from eight to 48 ports when installed in Cisco 3600 or 2600 series modular access routers. Eight new mixed-media modules for the Cisco 3600 series offer increased ISDN density and a lower entry price for hybrid ISDN/analog dial solutions.

Additionally, Cisco announced that ISDN Primary Rate Interface (PRI) and Basic Rate Interface (BRI) modules already available for the Cisco 3600 series, are now available for the Cisco 2600 series.

"This is great news for customers that want to share ISDN services among a number of end-users, but would like to purchase multi-purpose routers and take advantage of the added benefit of a lower price per port," said systems engineering manager of Cisco Systems.

"Used in combination with digital modems, the new mixed-media network modules for the 3600 series provide users with faster connect times and greater performance." The new modules extend the range of applications that can be consolidated within a Cisco 3600 or Cisco 2600 series router. The wide array of modules available for both the 3600 and 2600 series routers accommodates a variety of network applications spanning dial services, Internet/intranet access, secure virtual private networks (VPNs) and multi-service data/voice/video integration.

ment tool, for which demonstrations were held during the event. Developer Days 98, held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Dubai, focused on key development tool technologies across a broad range of applications including development tools, Internet technologies and database administration and support.

Compaq-Novell Partnership Enters New Era

Compaq Computer Middle East, Mediterranean & Africa

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INTERFACE BY ZEID NASSER

Intel and AMD race for clock-speed: 300MHz notebooks are here

THE RACE is one between Intel and AMD, to capture the market for high-performance processors.

Hot on the heels of Intel's announcement of its 300MHz Pentium II processor for notebooks—which is an impressive technical breakthrough—AMD also announced that its K6 processor is available in a 300MHz version for notebooks too!

What's more, the K6 for notebooks is priced in line with AMD policy to always be around 25 percent lower than Intel's corresponding chip.

The AMD processor will cost \$299, when bought in quantities of 1000 units. Compare that to the Intel announced price for the Pentium 300MHz, which is \$635, and you can imagine the agency Intel must be going through.

Of course, for the rest of us, this is all good news. With Intel and AMD battling it out, we get more processing power, in notebooks and desktops, for continuously dropping prices!

All things said, the Intel 300MHz processor for notebooks deserves credit for its specifications. According to Intel's statement "mobile Pentium II processors are designed to address the unique physical size, thermal and power consumption requirements of mobile PCs."

For example, Intel's mobile Pentium II processors incorporate an innovative technology called Quick Start which drops the processor power consumption to 0.4 watts when the mobile PC is idle or inactive.

This low-power mode preserves battery life of the system. Additionally, since the mobile Pentium II processor 300 MHz is based on the same P6 micro-architecture, packaging and thermal specifications as the 233 MHz and 266 MHz mobile Pentium II processors (introduced in April 1998), Intel's newest mobile processor requires no new system design engineering for PC makers to incorporate it into new mobile systems.

Countering this, AMD enjoys an advantage over Intel in the timing of its development cycle. AMD can come to market with mobile PC processors that integrate 3D instruction sets before Intel does. This will be a K6-2 processor, that supposedly outperforms Intel's Pentium II for notebooks.

Add to that the prospects that AMD will be able to introduce a 100MHz bus implementation for notebook computers within six months, and you have an Intel "killer". It should take Intel another six months after to catch-up.

However, Intel may be down, but it's not out. If the key to success is low cost, Intel should be able to lead in some segments next year with its Celeron processors for notebooks. In 1999, Intel will offer Celeron for notebooks running at 233MHz for as low as \$105 and a 266MHz processor for about \$155. Now, that should bring notebook Pentium power to the people.

Of course, Intel and AMD have on-going battles in the desktop processor market and have both, already, hit the 450MHz mark! But, that's a whole other discussion in its own right.

Here in Jordan, all these developments transpire into our market within a relatively short time-span. So, if you've always wanted a powerful notebook PC, it's time to start saving up. Within a few months, you could have your dream machine for less than you ever expected!



News update

Microsoft's Worldwide Developer Days in Dubai

Microsoft recently held a special event for the development community in the Middle East. Microsoft's Developer Days '98 in Dubai marked the regional launch of Microsoft's most popular worldwide technical information series. Microsoft Gulf also announced the immediate availability of its Visual Studio 6.0, the latest version of Microsoft's award-winning application develop-

ment tool, for which demonstrations were held during the event. Developer Days 98, held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Dubai, focused on key development tool technologies across a broad range of applications including development tools, Internet technologies and database administration and support.

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

En Mésopotamie, les premières villes durent plus longtemps par Veronique Abu-Nymeh

La Jordanie peut à juste titre se prévaloir de compter parmi les régions qui ont vu surgir les premières villes de l'humanité. Toutefois, ce phénomène d'urbanisation, qui se place au début de l'âge de Bronze (entre 3000 et 2500 av. J.-C.), doit être relativisé en regard du développement des centres urbains de Mésopotamie. À la même époque, ceux-ci s'étendent sur au moins 50 hectares, alors que les sites jordaniens ne dépassent pas 10 hectares. En Mésopotamie, le processus d'urbanisation, légèrement antérieur, suit une évolution naturelle du gros village en bourgade puis en ville, évolution guidée essentiellement par un accroissement démographique et économique. Déjà pourvus d'architecture monumentale, ces sites sont désormais occupés sans interruption. Rien de tel dans la partie occidentale du Croissant fertile : l'origine du phénomène dans cette région ne cesse de poser des interrogations. L'éclatement des villes semble coïncider avec la présence de populations venues du nord quelques siècles

Le site de Pella

auparavant mais qui ont eu tout le temps d'intégrer les cultures locales. Ont-elles transmis les principes de l'urbanisation mésopotamienne ? C'est peu probable. Les villes de notre région ne constituent pas de grands centres agricoles et commerciaux comme celles de Mésopotamie. Elles sont érigées sur des hauteurs isolées et aménagées à l'entour de remparts pour se défendre des attaques nomades ou des cités rivales (comme Pella). À côté des métropoles, des plaines mésopotamiennes, elles font figure plutôt de citadelles. Elles contrôlent néanmoins un territoire agricole mais leur niveau de vie reste moyen et leurs sociétés ne semblent pas encore évoluer vers un mode urbain. Ces bourgs sont brutalement abandonnés, parfois après destruction violente, environ 800 ans après leur érection et l'on assiste au retour d'un mode de vie ancestral, du pastoralisme, et de modestes agglomérations villageoises. Dans cette région, les populations n'étaient pas encore prêtes à réaliser l'équilibre entre vie citadine, agricole et pastorale.

Éclaboussures

Quelle culture ?

Le colloque sur les associations culturelles organisé la semaine dernière par le ministère de tutelle a permis d'identifier les principaux obstacles qui entravent le développement culturel dans ce pays. Manque de soutien financier aux associations, absence d'un cadre législatif approprié pour régir leurs activités, faible coordination entre les différents organismes, et pour résumer le tout, absence notable de politique nationale en matière de culture.

Premièrement, le budget du ministère de la culture dépasse à peine le million de dinars et une grande part de cette somme est affectée aux salaires et aux primes. Les crédits pour encourager la création artistique ou la publication de livres sont pratiquement inexistantes. Il est vrai que comparé aux autres portefeuilles, le ministère de la Culture fait figure de parent pauvre. Rattaché, un temps, au ministère de l'Information et désormais à celui de la Jeunesse, il n'a d'ailleurs pas d'existence à part entière.

Rappelons d'autre part, un point qui n'a pas été évoqué au cours du colloque - que la censure menace toujours les activités culturelles. L'ancien ministre Qassem Abou Aine voulait ainsi imposer un droit de regard préalable sur toutes les productions des associations. Il avait dû reculer devant l'opposition farouche de l'opinion.

En tout cas, l'ambiance n'est pas franchement au délire créatif. Parmi les nombreuses organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) qui s'occupent de culture (environ 300), la plupart sont inactives. Elles n'ont aucun moyen d'encourager les nouveaux talents et certaines n'ont même assez d'argent pour payer leur loyer. Le soutien du ministère se limite à 20.000 dinars que se partagent l'ensemble des associations.

Le secteur privé semble mieux se porter, à l'instar de la Fondation Abdoul-Hamid Shouman. Créée en 1984, cette fondation est, il faut bien le dire, devenu le centre culturel le plus actif du pays. À partir de cet exemple, pourquoi ne pas imaginer la création d'un fonds pour le développement culturel auquel participeraient les entreprises privées ?

Par ailleurs, une meilleure redistribution de la culture ne serait pas une gageure. Pour le moment, Amman se taille la part du lion, laissant le reste du pays, sauf quelques festivals, dans un désert culturel.

Mais en fin de compte la question fondamentale demeure : quelle culture voulons-nous ? Celles des chansons et des films à la qualité médiocre qui envahissent nos radios et nos écrans de télévision ou celle qui élève l'âme et la conscience du citoyen et éclaire sa vie ?

Suleiman Sweiss

Le Jourdain
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du Star
5664153

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sur Internet
<http://star.arabia.com>



Les Égyptiens représentent à eux seuls 85% de la main d'œuvre étrangère. Ils sont surtout employés dans les secteurs de la production, de l'agriculture et des services.

Égyptiens, Syriens, Irakiens et autres Sri-Lankais peuvent se sentir floués. Pendant les trois jours de la Conférence nationale sur le chômage, on a beaucoup parlé d'eux. En fait, on a beaucoup parlé de la masse qu'ils représentent : 300.000 à 350.000 selon les statistiques officielles. « Et si à la place de tous ces étrangers, on y mettait des Jordaniens ? », s'imaginent secrètement la plupart des participants de la conférence. Ils se disent aussi que le problème du chômage serait alors en partie réglé. Un chômage qui touche un peu moins de 200.000 Jordaniens.

Comment opérer cette substitution ? Le tour de passe-passe s'appelle le salaire minimum. « Avoir un salaire minimum, c'est lutter contre le chômage en luttant contre le travail des étrangers en Jordanie », déclare sans détour l'ancien ministre du Travail Abdel Hafez Shakhnabeh, les étrangers sortent un demi-milliard de dinars par an. À leur place, les Jordaniens avec l'argent gagné, feront tourner l'économie du pays.

L'idée est la suivante : en instaurant une rémunération-plancher, les Jordaniens accepteraient plus facilement des métiers, souvent considérés comme dévalorisés et dont les conditions sont soumise outrageusement au bon vouloir des

employeurs. « Le travailleur jordanien accepte des métiers difficiles si on lui offre de justes conditions d'emploi », assure Mazen Ma'aita, président de la Fédération générale des syndicats jordaniens (FGSJ). Son adjoint, Faïdallah Omran, prend à titre d'exemple la Maïne d'Amman qui a augmenté le salaire minimum des employés du nettoyage urbain de 60 à 120 JD. À partir de là, des centaines de Jordaniens ont rejoint un métier qui jusque là n'était pas rémunérateur.

150 JD Selon les syndicalistes, l'argument de « la culture de la honte » défendu notamment sous le gouvernement de Majali ne tient pas. « Les employeurs préfèrent les travailleurs étrangers parce qu'ils acceptent tout et sont corvéables à merci », explique l'un d'eux. « La culture de la honte n'existe pas, renchérit l'ancien ministre du Travail, la culture de la honte, c'est employer des travailleurs pour 40 à 60 JD par mois ».

Cette remarque rappelle la montée inquiétante de la pauvreté, qui concerne plus du tiers de la population. À cet égard, dans la tête des partisans du salaire minimum, sa mise en œuvre s'accompagne d'une augmenta-

tion notable des rémunérations, et d'une amélioration de la couverture sociale. Et Mazen Ma'aita d'avancer le chiffre de 150 JD pour le salaire minimum. Cependant, il ne s'agit pas d'un salaire fixe, identique dans toutes les professions. Pouvoirs publics, patrons et syndicats sont au moins d'accord sur une chose : le salaire minimum devra être d'un niveau différent selon le métier. C'est donc un moyen non seulement de combattre le chômage mais aussi la pauvreté. « Pour nous, le minimum, c'est le minimum pour vivre », assène le président de la FGSJ. Le ton est donné. Les syndicats mettent d'ores et déjà la barre très haut et entendent du même coup améliorer la situation de l'ouvrier jordanien qui « devant la pénurie de travail, est obligé d'accepter des salaires très bas ».

Du côté patronal, on est bien sûr moins enthousiaste et l'on s'inquiète plus volontiers des risques de l'introduction d'un salaire minimum. « Cela risque d'encourager plus d'étrangers

à venir travailler en Jordanie », prévient Abdel Nour Habbayeh, secrétaire général de la Chambre de l'Industrie, avant d'ajouter : « Le salaire minimum peut être un coup de pouce psychologique aux travailleurs mais le problème n'est pas là. Nous avons besoin de plus d'investissements et de les employer à bon escient afin d'accroître la demande en biens et en services et de créer de vrais emplois ».

Un comité, un audit Néanmoins la Chambre de l'Industrie n'est pas complètement hostile à l'idée d'un plancher pour les rémunérations. « Simplement, nous de-

vons étudier la question prudemment », insiste le conseiller auprès de la Chambre, Alid Dajani, afin d'éviter des effets contraires. En cas de mesures inconsidérées, les entreprises pourraient être tentées par une augmentation de leur productivité et un licenciement massif pour éviter le gonflement de la masse salariale. Conséquence directe : la progression dramatique du chômage. L'audit est envisagé dans le communiqué final de la Conférence nationale. Mais déjà, le Ministère du Travail a formé un comité de six personnes (deux représentants des pouvoirs publics, deux du patronat et deux syndicalistes), chargé dans les semaines à venir d'étudier la

question. Avant de commencer ses travaux, il devra recevoir l'aval du Premier ministre. Ce comité répondra enfin à la lettre de la loi du travail, de 1996 dans son article 52 et marque peut-être une évolution des mentalités.

Il y a deux ans, le ministre du Travail de l'époque, Abdel Hafez Shakhnabeh, avait organisé une conférence sur le salaire minimum avec tous les partenaires sociaux. « Tout le monde était d'accord avec l'idée », se souvient l'examinateur mais les attendus de la conférence sont depuis restés lettre morte. Lors de la réunion, divers aspects avaient été abordés et selon Dr. Shakhnabeh, il avait été montré que le salaire

minimum ne gênait en rien les investissements du secteur privé et la compétitivité des produits jordaniens.

Les patrons n'ont semble-t-il pas été convaincus, encouragés par le libéralisme des conseils des instances internationales. « Elles sont plutôt contre le salaire minimum », estime Mohammed Lamine Fares, membre de l'Organisation arabe du travail, et soutiennent la compétition et la mobilité de la main d'œuvre dans le cadre du redressement économique. Le « SMIC » à la jordanienne, pour quoi pas ? mais tout le monde n'est pas prêt à le voir entrer sur la scène économique.

Yamick Laine

Le salaire minimum dans les coulisses

Il n'était pas au programme officiel de la Conférence nationale sur le chômage qui vient de s'achever. Mais les participants l'ont évoqué à plusieurs reprises et ses plus chauds partisans voient en lui une solution au fléau qui frappe le pays.

Le SMIC, institution française

La revendication d'un « vrai » minimum de rémunération des travailleurs était déjà, en France, une revendication des mouvements ouvriers du XIX^e siècle.

Cependant dans l'après-guerre, une telle revendication n'était plus considérée comme une revendication économique, mais comme une revendication sociale. C'est dans les conventions collectives de 1936 qu'est né le SMIC. L'établissement d'un salaire minimum par catégorie de travail, par région, l'extension par branche professionnelle de ces conventions et les décisions rendues à la suite de conflits collectifs ont été ainsi à l'origine

du SMIC. L'objectif principal de ce mouvement était de lutter contre la dégradation des conditions de travail et de garantir un niveau de vie décent aux travailleurs. Le SMIC a été introduit en France en 1936, sous l'impulsion du Front populaire, et a depuis été révisé à plusieurs reprises pour tenir compte de l'évolution du coût de la vie et des besoins des travailleurs.

En France, le SMIC est une institution bien établie, qui garantit un minimum de rémunération aux travailleurs. Cependant, dans d'autres pays, comme la Jordanie, cette institution n'existe pas encore, ce qui pose des problèmes de rémunération et de conditions de travail pour les travailleurs locaux et étrangers.



En France, les femmes sont trois fois plus nombreuses que les hommes à recevoir le SMIC.

Divertissement

Nous ne sommes pas des pantins

On peut dire beaucoup de choses avec des marionnettes. Démonstration avec Saïd wal Bolbol, un spectacle franco-palestinien sur la liberté et découverte d'une profession qui manque cruellement de reconnaissance au Proche-Orient.

Dimanche dernier, le Centre culturel royal s'est transformé en l'espace d'une soirée en cour de récréation. Dans son hall luxueux, une centaine de bambins s'impatientent. Venu de différents établissements défavorisés, ils sont aussi bien chrétiens que musulmans : à sept ans, les différences ethnico-religieuses appartiennent au monde étrange des adultes. Isabelle Veillon et Hussam Zuhka en profitent. Unifiant pour la première fois leurs troupes Traffic Jam Theatre et Kharanif, ils ont concocté le spectacle de marionnettes Saïd wal Bolbol. Leur rencontre à Jérusalem, ville internationale, en 1996 est un clin d'œil malicieux du destin : ils sont respectivement française et palestinienne. « À travers un spectacle simple et compréhensible par tous, nous essayons de promouvoir l'idée de liberté », affirme Hussam. Et dans le même esprit, le spectacle est muet afin d'être ouvert à tous, sans discrimination linguistique. « Cela réduit l'interaction avec le public », reconnaît Isabelle. Mais cela excite davantage l'imagination des enfants, plus libres dans leur interprétation. Hussam nous confie la sienne : « Quand je vois cet oiseau en cage, je ne peux m'empêcher de songer à la situation de mon peuple ».

Car comme dans les Fables de La Fontaine, le conte est une vraie ménagerie et les animaux éprouvent des sentiments très humains comme l'indifférence, l'amour, la curiosité, ou la haine. Mais cette jungle appar-



Grâce à Saïd, l'oiseau et le chat vont se réconcilier.

tient au monde merveilleux des enfants et on aboutit rapidement au processus de paix entre le chat et l'oiseau, grâce à la médiation d'un petit garçon. Dans la salle, les écoliers réagissent avec véhémence : rires, chahuts, commentaires, cris, aucun ne reste indifférent. Et la musique, loin d'adoucir les nerfs, garantit le maintien de l'ambiance.

Guignols de l'Info

Mais les deux créateurs sont las : « Seuls les spectacles de marionnettes pour enfants existent dans la région, alors que cet art s'adresse à tous », s'indignent en choeur les deux manipulateurs. Pourquoi ce

manque de reconnaissance ? L'absence de tradition dans la région sans doute. Mais une fois de plus, le manque de liberté d'expression est le grand responsable : la dérision est mal vue au Proche-Orient. Ici, les spectacles comiques doivent d'abord passer devant une commission très susceptible. La situation n'a rien à voir avec la France, héritière du fameux Guignol. Chaque soir depuis dix ans, un programme très corsé, caricaturant le journal télévisé diffusé au même moment sur les autres chaînes, représente les hommes politiques en marionnettes de latex. Il est très judicieusement intitulé Les Guignols de l'Info. En 1995, on y voyait notamment François

Minerrand, visage cadavérique, surmonté d'un titre évocateur. La Fin Tranquille, référence implicite à sa campagne présidentielle de 1988, et surtout à sa phase terminale de cancer. On imagine assez mal ce genre de plaisanterie en Jordanie. « C'est la preuve que ce pays n'est pas démocratique », affirme Hussam. Ainsi, les conséquences s'en ressentent durablement dans la vie de tous les jours des marionnettistes. Il n'existe aucune aide des ministères de la Culture dans les pays du Proche-Orient. « Nous devons nous contenter d'une salle à Jérusalem où nous construisons nous-mêmes nos décors et nos personnages », confie-t-il. Et un deuxième employé sert d'appoint financier : ainsi Hussam est-il également prophète dentaire et Isabelle fait-elle des ménages. Grâce au sponsoring du Centre culturel français, ils ont pu sortir de Palestine pour la première fois et offrir à Amman cinq représentations dont une gratuite, dans un camp palestinien.

Et après ? « Notre rêve serait de monter un spectacle de marionnettes pour adultes » mais le fil conducteur est encore vague : les relations humaines. Sans doute devra-t-il rester très évasif, afin d'éviter les écueils de la liberté que sont les censeurs, de sévir. ■

Antoine Marette

Entretien avec Sophie Marceau

« Tout le monde peut comprendre Anna Karénine »

Le long métrage inspiré de l'œuvre de Léon Tolstoï est encore sur les écrans d'Amman. Son interprète principale, Sophie Marceau, nous livre sa vision du cinéma et de la vie. Un témoignage sans nuance, à l'image du film...

Comme beaucoup

d'actrices françaises, Sophie Marceau n'aime pas étaler sa vie privée au grand jour. Ce qui est compréhensible quand on sait qu'elle a passé plus de la moitié de ses trente années d'existence devant la caméra. Son premier film, mondiallement connu La Boum, lui valut la célébrité à 14 ans. Mais elle préfère ne pas revenir sur ses débuts : « Je ne veux pas parler de mon passé. Certes, nous sommes tous influencés par le milieu d'où nous venons. Mais je veux aller de l'avant, je suis servie ! Mais j'ai besoin de sentir ce mouvement. Pour moi, le passé, c'est comme revenir sur quelque chose, ce qui est stupide. Le plus important c'est demain ».

L'adolescente amoureuse se transforme progressivement en séductrice fatale et s'impose dans le top 10 des femmes avec lesquelles les Français voudraient « dormir ». « Je n'ai plus

aucune intimité », déclare-t-elle. Fille d'ouvriers, Sophie Marceau a grandi en région parisienne. Née Sophie Marceau, elle change son nom pour des raisons professionnelles. Elle est fiancée à un Polonais de 55 ans, Andrzej Zulawski, qui l'a dirigée dans L'Amour Braqué (1984). Mes nuits sont plus belles que vos jours (1989). La note bleue (1991) et avec qui elle a eu un petit garçon, Vincent.

Au début des années 1990, Sophie décide de commencer une carrière internationale, laissant de côté le cinéma français, envers lequel elle se montre très critique : « Ses aspects négatifs sont tels, que je ne vais plus au cinéma. Je ne peux donc pas avoir d'avis. J'ai toujours l'impression d'avoir vu les choses plusieurs fois, c'est tellement français. Ça ne veut pas dire que le cinéma français doit convenir au monde entier ».

Mais pourquoi pas ? Tout le monde peut comprendre Anna Karénine, c'est très russe dans le style et l'histoire, pourtant c'est compréhensible par tous. Le problème du cinéma français c'est que personne ne peut le comprendre. Pourquoi ? Parce qu'il ne parle pas des éternels thèmes.

Le choix de l'étranger se révèle en tout cas fructueux : ses rôles dans Par-delà les nuages et Braveheart furent parmi ses plus beaux succès. Malgré sa volonté de vivre entre Paris et Varsovie, elle commence à se faire un nom à Hollywood.

Son dernier long métrage, Anna Karénine, adaptation du roman de Tolstoï, n'a malheureusement pas eu les honneurs de la critique. Certaines mauvaises langues ont même rebaptisé le film d'Anna Karénine. Sophie Marceau persiste néanmoins à défendre le film : « Anna Karénine est une leçon de vie. Comment réagir face à un événement, un incident qui n'empêchera pas le monde de tourner mais qui changera votre vie ? Vous tombez simplement amoureux d'un autre homme. Et alors que faire ? Blessé votre mari qui vous aime et que vous aimez, accepter d'abandonner votre enfant ou tout oublier et revenir chez vous en pensant à l'être aimé ? Cependant, je ne pense pas non plus qu'Anna soit pessimiste. Elle prend les choses comme elles sont. C'est très proche de la vérité, de notre vérité. Ni plus ni moins. ■

D'après internet



Le mot de la semaine «TYPHON»

Telles les tornades

Les mots français de l'étranger ont souvent une origine curieuse. C'est le cas de «typhon», qui désigne une tornade. Ce mot vient du grec «typhos», qui signifie «obscurité» ou «tempête». Il a été introduit en français par les écrivains du XVIIIe siècle, notamment par Voltaire dans son roman «Zadig». Aujourd'hui, le mot est utilisé pour désigner une tornade, mais il a aussi une autre signification : celle d'un typhon, c'est-à-dire d'un ouragan ou d'une tempête tropicale.

Le mot «typhon» a une origine curieuse. Il vient du grec «typhos», qui signifie «obscurité» ou «tempête». Il a été introduit en français par les écrivains du XVIIIe siècle, notamment par Voltaire dans son roman «Zadig». Aujourd'hui, le mot est utilisé pour désigner une tornade, mais il a aussi une autre signification : celle d'un typhon, c'est-à-dire d'un ouragan ou d'une tempête tropicale.

Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

C'est la vie L'agenda français d'Amman

Exposition 1

Rula Shukairy revient au CCF pour nous présenter ses dernières créations abstraites. Jusqu'au 30 septembre au CCF. Entrée libre.

Exposition 2

De la Ruche au Bateau Lavoisier, des aquats aux constructions neuves, Genevieve Hofman a fait un recensement des cités d'artistes dans la capitale française à la fin du XXe siècle. Une visite d'un Paris atypique en 69 photos. Jusqu'au 30 septembre au Cercle des artistes plasticiens jordaniens (Djebel Lweibdeh). Entrée libre.

Cinéma

Cycle Portraits de femmes. Camille Clavel. Film de Bruno Nuyten (1988), couleur, sous-titré en anglais, avec Isabelle Adjani et Gérard Depardieu. L'annonciation d'une femme dévorée par une double passion : Auguste Rodin et l'amour de la sculpture... Séances au Centre culturel français le lundi 28 septembre à 18h30 et 20h30.

Conférence

Depuis 1991, Marc Laverne est chargé de recherche au CNRS. Il vient nous livrer sa vision de la Jordanie contemporaine, quelques années après la publication d'un ouvrage entièrement consacré au royaume hachémite. Mardi 29 septembre à 18h30 au CCF.

«Ammian», l'Arménienne fidèle

Le quartier arménien est l'un des plus anciens d'Amman. Aujourd'hui déserté par beaucoup d'Arméniens à la recherche de plus de confort, il abrite encore les institutions de cette communauté qui a su, depuis son installation, créer des liens forts avec le pouvoir hachémite.

Une dizaine d'albums

photos posés devant lui. Abraham Mahredjian sourit. En feuilletant quelques pages, il vient de retracer l'histoire de l'émirat de Transjordanie depuis sa création, en 1923. Une date qui coïncide avec le développement de la communauté arménienne dans ce pays. Sur les vieux clichés qu'il conserve précieusement, on peut voir notamment l'émir Abdallah entouré de sa garde tcherkesse. Ma-

heureusement, aucune photo ne montre l'émir en train de monter ou de descendre de son véhicule. Car pour lui tenir la porte, on aurait probablement aperçu un Arménien. Dès le début des années 20, c'est en effet un certain Abou Anna qui travaillait au service de l'émir Abdallah en tant que chauffeur. Hag Pelikian était lui son tailleur, et Bédros Doumanian l'un de ses photographes.

Abraham Mahredjian est lui aussi entré au service de la fa-

mille royale jordannienne. Diplômé de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts de Beyrouth, il se rend en 1966 en Jordanie pour participer au projet de décoration intérieure d'un bâtiment officiel. Son travail séduit des hauts responsables jordaniens et il se voit proposer de réaliser l'architecture intérieure de beaucoup de bâtiments officiels de la capitale.

A 58 ans, ce passionné de philatélie est aujourd'hui l'un des piliers de la communauté arménienne de ce pays. Il fait d'ailleurs partie du conseil chargé d'administrer la vie de cette communauté aux côtés de trois autres Arméniens.

La proie des loups

En raison de liens anciens et forts, les Arméniens se sont vu accorder par le pouvoir hachémite une large autonomie pour gérer la vie de la communauté. «Nous n'avions pas les mêmes traditions ni la même religion, explique Abraham, il était plus simple pour le pouvoir de nous déléguer la gestion des affaires de la communauté». Chaque formalité concernant les mariages ou les divorces est effectuée par le conseil de la communauté, puis validée par les autorités judiciaires jordaniennes. Cette confiance repose bien sûr sur la longue collaboration entre la communauté arménienne et la famille royale qui manquait au début du siècle de nombreux spécialistes et qualifiés dans certains domaines.

La première arrivée importante d'Arméniens en Jordanie remonte à 1915. On estime à environ 150.000 le nombre d'Arméniens ayant fui vers le Proche-Orient après le génocide turc. Pour beaucoup, la Jordanie n'est qu'une étape d'une à deux années. En 1918, la grande majorité prend la direction de Jérusalem et de la Palestine passée sous mandat britannique, ainsi que de la Cilicie, passée sous mandat français. Mais trois années plus tard, beaucoup d'Arméniens refont le trajet en sens inverse avec l'évacuation des troupes françaises de Cilicie. Certaines familles, dont les parents s'étaient installés à Amman dès 1916, décident alors de rester dans le royaume hachémite.

Né en 1923 à Amman, Sarkis Tepejian se souvient bien des premières années de la communauté arménienne. Beaucoup vivaient autour d'Amman, à Salt ou Wadi Sir. Puis avec le développement de la capitale hachémite, ils ont choisi de venir à Amman. Ils s'installent sur l'une des sept collines d'Amman, Djebel Ashrafiyye, près des sources de Ras-el-Ain. Sur un versant pentu, ils construisent leurs premières maisons. Dans une étude sur la naissance de la communauté arménienne à Amman, la chercheuse Anna Ohannessian-Chapin décrit ainsi l'arrivée des Arméniens sur le Djebel Ashrafiyye : «Les terres du Djebel Ashrafiyye appartenaient au Circassien Majid Norway. À partir des années 40, l'Arménien Hagaz achète des terres de Hagaz et les revend à ses compatriotes. Malgré ces mouvements, cette colline était encore considérée comme un lieu inhabitable. Les gens avaient peur de devenir la proie des loups...».

Avec environ un millier de personnes, cette communauté reste assez réduite. Elle connaît une subite augmentation après 1948 et le premier conflit israélo-arabe. Le nombre d'Arméniens franchissant cette

année à la Jordanie est estimé à 10.000. La plupart rejoignent le Djebel Ashrafiyye qui gagne alors le nom de «Hay-al-Arman», le quartier arménien. Pendant une vingtaine d'années, ce quartier ne cesse de grossir et la communauté arménienne se dote de ses premières institutions et associations. «Jusque là, nous ne possédions pas d'école. Nous louions des locaux sur une autre colline, le Djebel Nachif», raconte Gairat Haroutian, professeur d'arménien depuis plus de 40 ans à Amman, ce n'est qu'en 1962 que nous avons pu construire notre propre école au cœur du quartier arménien. Celle-ci a vu le jour grâce aux aides financières de deux fondations : la fondation Gulbenkian (Portugal) et l'AGBU (États-Unis). Une nouvelle église arménienne orthodoxe est créée juste à côté en 1968, dans la même rue que les deux clubs déjà existants et l'association de la croix rouge arménienne. «Nous sommes une petite communauté mais il est important que nous ayons deux clubs, insiste Abraham Mahredjian, partout dans le monde, les communautés arméniennes ont toujours eu besoin de ce type d'émulation pour se développer et être dynamiques».

Vers la fin des années 60, le Djebel Ashrafiyye va connaître deux vagues d'émigration. Beaucoup d'Arméniens émigrent vers le Canada, les États-Unis ou l'Australie à la Jordanie. Quant à ceux qui restent, ils commencent à trouver le Djebel Ashrafiyye trop étroit ou trop modeste. La partie ouest d'Amman est elle beaucoup plus attirante. Peu à peu, la population de ce quartier change. Seules les institutions arméniennes restent à cet endroit, ainsi que les Arméniens nou-

vellement arrivés en Jordanie.

Dans les années 70 et 80, beaucoup ont en effet fui les combats du Liban. Et depuis le début des années 90, des Arméniens irakiens rejoignent la capitale jordannienne. En arrivant à Amman, les Irakiens peuvent bénéficier du réseau d'entraide arménien. Il est assez facile pour eux de trouver un emploi et un logement. Une halte jordannienne qui ne dure bien souvent que quelques mois, la plupart d'entre eux émigrant vers les États-Unis ou l'Europe.

Pas de politique

Avec ces multiples migrations, il est assez difficile de donner un chiffre exact de la communauté arménienne vivant en Jordanie. Selon Abraham Mahredjian, 4000 Arméniens possèdent la nationalité jordannienne, alors que 3000 autres, Libanais, Syriens ou Irakiens, vivent depuis de longues années en Jordanie sans toutefois déte-

nir cette nationalité. «Pour beaucoup, ce n'est pas très important, explique Abraham, les gens peuvent travailler et vivre ici. Ils n'ont pas besoin d'être Jordaniens». Et le fait d'obtenir le droit de voter ne semble pas être un argument de poids : «Pour nous, l'essentiel est de pouvoir vivre de notre travail en paix. Les activités politiques ne nous intéressent pas».

Si des chiffres précis sont difficiles à obtenir en raison des flux de départ et d'arrivée, une chose est certaine. Après s'être stabilisée dans les années 80, la communauté arménienne de Jordanie connaît un léger déclassement. «Nous avons l'habitude d'avoir environ 200 enfants scolarisés, précise Gairat Haroutian, aujourd'hui, l'émigration a repris, et nous ne comptons plus que 160 enfants».

Pour les nouvelles générations, la Jordanie est en effet moins attirante que certains

pays occidentaux. De plus, en raison de la situation économique morose que connaît la Jordanie, certains membres plus anciens de cette communauté envisagent eux aussi de quitter le royaume hachémite. C'est le cas d'Ara Voskian, l'un des chefs de service du quotidien anglophone Jordan Times. «Si la situation ne s'améliore pas, je crois que certains partiront ailleurs, là où il y a de meilleures perspectives», explique-t-il.

Une décision qui sera cependant difficile à prendre pour les Arméniens jordaniens en raison de l'attachement qu'ils portent à ce pays. «La seule raison qui peut nous pousser à quitter ce pays est l'économie», ajoute Ara Voskian, car depuis toujours, les Arméniens aiment la famille hachémite qui les a toujours traités d'égal à égal en leur offrant une grande liberté».

Olivier Bras

Les Catilinaires, conte au coin du feu

Les Catilinaires, un roman français d'Amélie Nothomb (1995), 210 p., édition Albin Michel.

En prêt au Centre culturel français.

Il était une fois un couple de vieilles

personnes qui croit trouver le bonheur dans une maison de campagne isolée. Mais à peine installés, voilà qu'ils reçoivent la visite de leur seul voisin : Monsieur Bernardin. Étrange M. Bernardin, qui s'incruste tous les jours de 4 à 6 heures chez Juliette et Émile. Il s'assoit dans un fauteuil, prend une tasse de café et se tait. Pendant deux heures, sa seule conversation se limite au rythme binaire de ces «oui» et de ces «non». On a rarement imaginé pire torture, surtout qu'Émile, poli à l'excès, n'ose froter son voisin dehors. Bref, ce qui devait être une retraite d'amour se transforme bientôt en calvaire insupportable. Tous les ingrédients sont réunis pour nous plonger dans l'univers du conte : une forêt profonde, des retraités gentils et surtout des monstres tant par leur psychisme (Pauline Bernardin) et par leur physique (Bernardine Bernardin, le kyste à l'antenne). On sait bien que tout cela finira bien mais on se laisse prendre au jeu de l'angoisse. Il ne se passe pas grand chose dans les Catilinaires. La plupart du temps, les personnages sont assis et discutent. Mais les dialogues ouatés et ciselés à merveille par Amélie Nothomb nous laissent entrevoir que le pire peut arriver à tout moment.



Amélie Nothomb, un vrai talent littéraire à 31 ans.

nous administre une leçon de vie tout en finesse : de la moralité en douceur, avant de nous endormir à poings fermés.

Y.L.

Dormez et dites-moi qui vous êtes !

Des médecins ont décidé de traiter les troubles psychologiques par l'hypnose. Une technique complètement nouvelle en Jordanie.

Trois psychothérapeutes :

des moustiquaires. La paresse aidant, c'est ainsi qu'on pourrait les appeler puisqu'ils sont trois. Mais le nom de pionniers leur convient mieux. Ces trois médecins sont en effet les premiers à avoir introduit l'hypnose comme traitement médical en Jordanie. Dans leur cabinet privé de Djebel Amman, ils ont commencé à se lancer sur cette voie nouvelle en février dernier. «Il y a trois ans, je me suis rendu aux États-Unis pour assister à une conférence médicale sur l'hypnotérapie et les nouvelles méthodes pour traiter certaines maladies et un an après, j'y suis retourné pour suivre un stage», raconte le docteur Wafar Shaar. À la suite de son expérience américaine, il s'associe avec deux autres confrères et ouvre un cabinet, où en plus des traitements classiques, il met en pratique l'hypnose.

Les patients sont encore peu nombreux. Une vingtaine par mois tout de même viennent essayer cette nouveauté, la plupart pour arrêter de fumer ou se débarrasser d'une migraine. «Mais, prévient le médecin, on ne peut pratiquer l'hypnose que sur la demande du patient, sinon, nous aurions des ennuis avec les hautes autorités médicales et bien sûr avec le malade lui-même». Toute séance d'hypnose demande l'homologation et la confiance du médecin. Lors de la consultation, le patient peut en effet être amené à dévoiler des informations sur sa vie, qu'il n'a pas forcément envie de faire connaître hors du cabinet.

L'hypnose produit en fait chez le patient un état à mi-chemin entre l'éveil et le sommeil, afin de permettre, par la suggestion orale, la disparition des troubles. «C'est un état de conscience modifié que tout le monde a vécu sans le savoir. Par exemple, en conduisant sur une route que l'on connaît bien, il nous arrive de traverser des endroits sans nous en rendre compte, comme si nous étions en conduite automatique», explique le docteur Maher Zeid, un des psychothérapeutes du cabinet.

Auto-traitement

Précision essentielle : le malade ne dort pas quand il se trouve sous hypnose. Au contraire, il est totalement conscient de ses actes et il est impossible de lui demander d'agir contre son gré. En état d'hypervigilance, tous ses sens sont en éveil et même après le «réveil», il est capable de se rappeler les propos tenus pendant sa «somnolence». Grâce à l'hypnose, on traite surtout la douleur, qu'elle soit chronique ou aiguë : il peut s'agir d'une arthrose, d'une irritation du côlon ou encore d'une douleur traumatique. «J'ai déjà soigné une jeune femme qui souffrait d'une brûlure importante à la main, cite en exemple le docteur Shaar, les médecins ne pouvaient plus rien lui prescrire pour la calmer. Je l'ai donc mise en état d'hypnose et proposé de plonger sa main dans l'eau glacée. La douleur a alors disparu. Mais sa main é-

ait devenu si insensible qu'elle le pensait morte. Je l'ai donc invitée à la réchauffer jusqu'à ce qu'elle décide que le retour des sensations était suffisant».

Dans le milieu hospitalier jordannien, l'hypnose se développe peu à peu pour éviter ou alléger le recours à l'anesthésie lors d'interventions comme l'accouchement ou lors de problèmes de santé chez la femme enceinte. «Parfois je suis appelé pour des interventions chirurgicales où l'anesthésie est impossible. Chez l'enfant, l'hypnose fonctionne d'autant mieux qu'il a une imagination riche et répond bien à la suggestion orale de l'hypnose», précise le psychologue.

Les autres applications de l'hypnose sont nombreuses : maladies de la peau (eczéma, psoriasis), asthme afin d'apprendre à gérer les crises, bouillonnements d'oreilles, allergies, dépendance au tabac, boulimie. «On peut également traiter les maladies liées au stress, à l'anxiété ou d'origine psychosomatique», indique encore le docteur Shaar. Chaque séance d'hypnose est précédée d'une consultation médicale classique et d'examen complets. Et surtout l'hypnose ne remplace pas les autres moyens à la disposition du médecin. «C'est une méthode d'auto-traitement, où le patient apprend à soulager sa douleur.

Youssef Abu Saleh

Shir Arta On balade

Khaldoon Tabaza

The cyber net navigator

EDITOR'S NOTE: Younger leaders, this month's supplement in *The Star*, should be seen as an innovation since it addresses young business leaders in Jordan. Increasingly, young managers in their 20s and 30s are holding the fort in top local companies. *The Star's* Rasheed Al Rousan looks at four views of business management and innovation that younger leaders are bringing to Jordanian industry. Articles follow:

YOUNG AND ambitious. Khaldoon Tabaza is just about to complete his fourth year as the managing director of Arabia.On.Line (<http://www.arabia.com>), an Internet-based online service. Since its establishment in 1994, the company has grown rapidly. Today, it has 32 employees. In addition to its 24-hour on-line services, it provides business develop-

ment and Internet consultation services. These include strategy consultation, analysis and design, project management, website development, E-commerce business systems, graphic design and user interface, and much more.

The 27-year-old manager doesn't have a business administration degree as one would expect. He is a medicine graduate who chose to venture into the world of the cyber net. He started out as an editor-in-chief of *Bye Middle East Magazine*, a computer magazine that used to be published in Amman.

This is in addition to his experience as a freelance writer and publisher of the Arabic edition of the Popular Science magazine under the name "Al Jadeed". "I finished school with high grades, and my parents wanted me to become a doctor. They were against the idea of establishing a company. But since then, they became really proud of what I have



Tabaza at work

achieved," Tabaza explains.

They are proud for sure, Arabia.On.Line developed rapidly due to Tabaza's serious efforts and determination. "Our business is highly unconventional—innovation and creativity are a must. We are dealing with intangible assets, which require the least traditional level of management," he said.

Nevertheless, the young manager is not alone; his company depends on the teamwork spirit and commitment of the staff; all are free to exchange different ideas and opinions. When you enter the company building you will discover that young people of Tabaza's age and younger are running the show.

"Every time we hold a meeting, we start with a brainstorming session where diverse ideas and topics from everyone are discussed. Cru-

cial decisions are then based upon these," he stated.

"I am a democratic director. I try to learn from older employees who are more experienced than I am. However, every businessman must have a policy of his own to base his decisions on," he states. Such decisions require the young leader to spend extra office hours at week-ends. This is to guarantee the quality of online services that are provided.

When it comes to financial matters, the young manager admits that he may lack experience. In this respect, he is mainly involved in running the side that is related to the company's main business stream: the Internet.

However, Tabaza explains that the company's business is international rather than local. "We are an international on-line service, which

is why we try to stay away from local bureaucracies," he says.

"Arabia.On.Line is now acknowledged as the Arab world's leading digital online company."

Today, the company is heading towards different fields of multimedia and communication, where the challenge has just begun.

Tabaza's ultimate aim is to build up a platform for the first Arab world's digital nerve net. "Our vision is to globalize our work as large as we can," he says.

Khaldoon Tabaza and his team are one of a kind. Although the responsibilities are growing bigger and bigger, the company is highly motivated by its young leader. In the end, winning isn't everything; it is the only thing!

Mudieb Haddad, Junior

The third generation manager

SINCE ITS establishment in 1953, Eagle Distilleries Co. has become one of the leading companies in the Kingdom. Now, the business legacy is in the hands of the third generation of the Haddad family.

After graduating from Virginia with a BA degree in business and economics, Mudieb S. Haddad has become the executive manager of the company. Part of his work involves taking charge of executive matters such as production levels, industry and label design.

Still in his mid-20s, Haddad has chosen to enter a business which his family has been running successfully for the last 45 years. He is aware of the challenges that lie ahead of him.

"I am very excited. There are lots of new ideas in my head which I want to put into practice," he says.

But because of his young age, these concepts and beliefs can be trying at times. However, he says, "my family are giving me the chance to prove myself. If they are convinced, my ideas are executed," Haddad explains.

His style of management went through different phases of development. When he first started he trusted everyone. Soon he discovered that in this huge business, trusting everyone is unrealistic. "One should be aware of the diversities of executive management, especially when it comes to dealing with different people from different backgrounds," he says.

This could also explain why the young leader has come to have a more assertive approach on the factory floor.



Haddad

The nature of the work demands a strict and solid way of management. This meant him introducing new rules which have since turned out to be practical.

"For efficient management, we have put suggestion boxes all over the company. This

has enabled workers from all ranks to write down their suggestions, and their complaints. I welcome any ideas coming out from anyone in the company, including the factory workers," he goes on to say. The company's production has reached a high level of efficiency. This is due to the young manager's efforts in maintaining quality standard production. "Quality, not quantity, is what I am looking for, although I believe that what customers look for is price not quality," he says.

One of the manager's projects was to export frozen French fries. This idea was the first of its kind. Unfortunately, it didn't bear fruit because of the policy governing local industries. For instance, the new customs tariffs imposed on imported potatoes is 40 percent.

Haddad points out that Jordanian companies are investing abroad, which is why the chances for big investments locally are small and inefficient. In addition, some people here are still employed on the basis of kin, and not for their abilities and education.

The young leader is ambitious and believes that there will be more opportunities for the company in the future.

At the end of the day, what really counts is how far we can enhance industrial production in Jordan, to pave the way for young businessmen like Haddad to lead the way to prosperity and success.

The greatest show off earth

By Naedine Joy Hazell

RHINEBECK, New York—It looks like an old cornfield, but it might easily be an aged football field or a former pasture. The grass is worn and rutted.

But this unassuming little field in the New York hills east of the Hudson River has an impressive job. It is a launch pad to the past, a part of a living museum devoted to keeping alive the years of early aviation.

Barnstorming biplanes toy with one another high above the field as hundreds of fascinated spectators stare skyward. "There's still something magical about these old planes...and that's a magic we like to share here at the Rhinebeck Aerodrome, an announcer shouts over the roar of rotary engines as the planes loop and dive and dip.

The aerodrome's weekend summer and autumn air shows are among the last of the flying circuses. And a circus atmosphere prevails, with cotton candy, snow cones, popcorn and picnic lunches.

If you want a latte or a glass of wine, you can always go to downtown Rhinebeck, which is as pretty a Hudson River village as you'll find.

Otherwise, at the airfield and museum, it's like a country fair every weekend. Spectators sit on plank benches supported by cinder blocks, eat at peeling picnic tables and use portable toilets.

Amenities are not the focus—the airplanes and the air show are.

Even the most jaded and cynical gasp with surprise and delight when a pair of barnstorming biplanes roars past the crowd, just feet above the grass runway. The wind carries the smell of burnt castor oil as the pilots whoosh by, long white scarves billowing behind them from the open cockpits.

It's the greatest show off earth.

For the true airplane buff, it might be important to know that the Saturday shows focus on the early history of flight with pioneer, World War I and Lindbergh-era aircraft and Sunday feature World War I and barnstorming planes. Visitors see early aircraft,



Jim Hare, an employee of the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, provides information to audiences while a vintage biplane performs a smoke demonstration during an air show. The air shows are performed every weekend from mid-June to mid-October.

from the fragile canvas and wood-struct airplanes created by the Wright Brothers to open-cockpit planes used in World War I dogfights and triple-wing planes usually only seen in air museums.

The museum and aerodrome are open during the week but the air shows are held only weekends. On a Saturday in

July, a reproduction D-7 Fokker—built from the original plans and equipped with an original engine—climbed into the sky and the announcer waxed poetic about the aerodrome's mission to keep the past alive.

"There are a few private collectors with these and a few at museums in England, but you

won't hear engines like that anywhere but here," the announcer boasted.

The Fokker was a mass-produced, German-made plane that battled with England's Sop with airplanes during some of World War I's most famous air battles.

The Aerodrome museum maintains one of the largest

collections of early planes and aviation-related equipment in the world. It is the culmination of one man's dream.

Cole Palen bought six World War I airplanes from Roosevelt Field on Long Island in 1951 and began restoring them. Seven years later he bought an abandoned farm in Rhinebeck and that was the start of some-

thing big.

Soon, Palen wasn't the only one flying vintage aircraft off the grass runway. Friends and other enthusiasts came. Then came the curious.

In 1960, the formal air shows began and grew in popularity and eventually drew the attention of National Geographic magazine, which pub-

lished a story about the shows in its October 1977 issue. It has been high-flying since then.

"Yes, ladies and gentlemen, we're at Rhinebeck offer one of the last of the flying circuses..."

Besides the grounds and the planes, the circus atmosphere is helped by old automobiles and related vehicles and actors in period dress. So if the announcer tries the old time-say-escaped-convict-on-the-loose gambit, just go along with it—it's kind of hokey but it's fun.

If you want to experience the thrill of flying, the aerodrome offers 15-minute open-cockpit biplane rides in its 1929 New Standard D-25, before and after the Saturday and Sunday shows. But sign up as soon as you arrive, because despite the \$30 price tag, the rides book quickly.

If you prefer a closer but less death-defying look, visit the vintage aircraft housed safely in corrugated steel hangars and barns not far from the airfield.

The collection has dozens of airplanes including a 1931 Great Lakes Trainer, a 1902 Wright Brothers Glider, a 1913 Caudron G3 reproduction that was featured in the "First Flights" TV documentary hosted by Neil Armstrong and an original 1936 Aeronca C3, one of the first planes to provide inexpensive flying for anyone who wanted to try.

When the air show is over, spectators often head into the village of Rhinebeck for a meal or a walk around the historic district. With 437 sites listed on the National Historic Register, Rhinebeck has one of the largest US historic districts and it includes the country's oldest inn, the Beckman Arms.

The Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome is open every day from May 15 through Oct. 31. Gates open at 10 a.m. daily. Weekend air shows, at 2 and 4 p.m., continue through Oct. 11 and 12. Daily admission during the week is \$5 for adults, \$2 for children 6-10, and under 6 is free. Weekend air show admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 6-10, and under 6 is free.

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A tele
milit

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Working inside
Jordan with
Amani

Shadi Al Majali

A tele-communications militant with a vision

"SHADI RAMZI" Al-Majali, a prominent achievement record and a Master degree holder from George Washington University in 1985. After a long period in the army, Shadi chose to venture into the world of communication services. Today, he is the general manager of Trans Jordan for Communication Services Co. Ltd. "Alo."

In 1983, he graduated with a double major in Mathematics, computers and military sciences from the Citadel, USA, and continued with his Master as a software engineer.

His career began as a field officer in the army, after which he became a UN military observer. In addition, in February 1994, he was appointed Director of HRH Prince Abdullah Bio Al-Husseini Military Office.

In 1996, he transferred his talents into the private sector when he assisted in the establishing of a payphone company, and was appointed General Manager. "Alo" started its operations in the local market on 23 October, 1997.

In this short span of time, the 36-year-old leader has led the company into great success. "We started at a zero level, but fortunately, we managed to launch our services in a very fast, efficient, and successful manner," he said.

The key to this remarkable success is due to Shadi's style of practical management policy. He strives on empowering his team to be interdependent,

insuring sound decision making, and continuous growth. "We tried to be very selective in choosing the right people for the acquired positions. To get the best employees, the company first interviewed over 450 people, but selected only 55."

This "selective" policy of employment is one of the standard work plans of the company. "After our October launching, we noticed an increasing market demand. From 55 employees we have now over 100. Since we started, only two employees left us," he said.

His vision has created a "company culture," that reflects positively on the crucial decisions that are being made. "I strongly believe in democratic management, the reason why all our decisions are decentralized." However, Shadi's long experience in the army has taught him how to deal with different types of people in different situations. His solid background in leadership skills only adds to the quality of a young, successful manager in Jordan.

"I consider my way of management similar to a semi-military operation, in terms of hard work and sticking to the rules of the job." But this also means good relations. Shadi has excellent relations with his staff, that is based on mutual respect.

Regarding the state of the national economy, the young manager is optimistic. "I believe that the economy is



Shadi Al Majali

undergoing a major transition. Today the rise of industrial cities in Al Mafrag and Sahab, in addition to all local and foreign investments in the country indicates positive economic growth that will be beneficial to Jordan in the long run."

He added that some citizens

aren't thankful enough, "as Jordanians, we complain a lot. If we stop importing foreign laborers from abroad, the level of unemployment will decrease dramatically," adding that there are approximately 600,000 employed foreigners in the Kingdom, which constitutes a

large number in comparison to the country's population.

To that effect, we made sure that all our employees are Jordanians. In "Alo", there is only one person who is not Jordanian. Mr Matthew Vonazoutas, is assigned by the O.T.E., the Greek Telecommunication company that owns 50 percent of "Alo's" capital. Mr Majali believes that employing more Jordanians is the right step towards diminishing what is regarded as the "shame culture."

The next few months are going to be a further challenge for the young leader. The company will present its latest product—payphones that can be used by credit cards. This will enable all credit card holders to communicate through the "Alo" payphones without having to search for a phone card.

But "Alo" has a competitor, JPP, which offers similar services. Shadi takes this in good spirit, proving that life itself is a competition.

Both Mr Majali and JPP manager Mr Ra'ed Rifai believe to clean competition, and each side is aware of the other's capabilities and success. For the young leader however, the challenge has yet to begin. Expanding in other countries is among the company's aspirations.

Shadi's military charisma, ambition, and determination are the emblems of his work, and the sky is the limit.

Al Asria Dairy

A step towards quality production

"TEAMWORK AND dedication," is the motto of Mohammed Alyan, executive manager of Al Asria Dairy Co. Since the age of 14, Alyan started work with his father and uncle, which gained him a lot of experience.

After graduating from England with a BA in politics and accounting, he joined the family business.

"I am very lucky to be involved in running the family business; both my father and uncle made me the managing director of the company. Although he recognizes that this means hardwork, he says, "I am ready for the job."

Despite the fact that the hyperactive leader is only 26 years old, Alyan has played a vital role in the development of Al Asria, making it one of the leading dairy companies in Jordan today.

The company has managed to scoop 25 percent of the market sales with its high level quality production. That is due to Alyan's democratic way of management. "In every important decision I take, I always refer to those who are more experienced than I am, like my uncle for instance," he explains.

Despite Alyan's young age, his relationship with the older employees is based on mutual respect. However, the young manager is loaded with new innovative ideas, which he believes, will open new horizons for the company's future. He is willing to apply what he has acquired while studying for his degree back in England. Thus, his management, commercial view, and financial techniques are based on strictly scientific methods.

"Whenever a new idea

pops out of my head, my family gives me the liberty to act, on the condition that I take full responsibility for the consequences," and as long as it is safe," he says.

Since its establishment in 1993, the Al Asria Co. has striven forward to provide full quality production; that is up to the level of those of other Arab countries. Alyan is confident that his staff are up to the challenge. "Our ultimate aim is to make our products acclaimed internationally, alongside other standard commodities," he explains.

In relation to the economic situation in the Kingdom, Alyan remarked, "I think that after the prolonged delay in the peace process, due to various political reasons, the country is facing economic stagnation—this is one of the problems facing the private sector."

Nevertheless, he went on to say that even in Europe and East Asia, the economy is fluctuating. On the other hand, the US economy is improving fast.

However, the young manager is fully satisfied with what his company has achieved up until now. "Within the last three years,

I am proud to say that we have proved to be up for the challenge," he explains.

It is not true to say that Israeli investors have shares in Al Asria. "It is well-known that there has been misinterpretation. People have mixed up our company's name with that of Al Aser Century Co., which shares its capital with Israeli investors," he confirmed.

He adds that the rumors

are spread by people, envious of the company's high quality of production, and is being perpetuated because they don't expect much from a local firm. "It is distressing to find that some people lack the spirit of competition," he adds.

The field of industrialization is heading towards localizing production, and turning the wheel ahead towards a more independent and stabi-

lized economy in the Kingdom.

Many local companies are providing top quality production today—and Asria is but one of them. It is obvious that people like Mohammed Alyan are succeeding in contributing to Jordan's financial development, and they may well become one of the major decision makers in the future.

Sailing away with Gharghour

AMMAN (Star)—Founded in 1928 in Jaffa, Palestine, by the late Tawfiq Gargour in partnership with his four sons, Tawfiq Gargour & Fils (TGF) will this year celebrate its 70th anniversary.

Initially, the company concentrated on trading activities, and over the years, the company expanded into new horizons.

TGF is now represented around the world through an international network of business activities ranging from auto-dealership, trading, industry and tourism to shipping service, ship agencies and commercial maritime operations. The company is a major shareholder in a number of leading firms, and is represented on the board of many industrial firms throughout the Americas, Europe and the Middle East.

Its trading activities include the representation of various international companies such as Mercedes Benz, where it has the general agency for Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and the south of France. TGF has trading associations with various companies such as Elf Aquitaine, Basf, Sulzer, Erro, Clarke, Nesle and IBM.

Mercedes Benz has its 11,500 square meter showroom and service center at Al Ragheim in Amman, offering one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated Mercedes workshops in the Middle East.

TGF is acting as agents for many leading shipping lines such as Rickmers Lines (Germany), Gearbulk (England), Lloyd Triestino (Italy), Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (Japan), and Sealand Services (USA), among others.

The company also acts as an agent for insurance companies such as Nordstern Allgemeine Versicherung (Germany), in addition to acting as an agent for cargo surveying and inspection companies such as Saybolt Eastern Hemisphere (Netherlands) and Viglenzone Adriatica (Italy).

TGF is a member in

BIMCO (Denmark) and ICC International Maritime Bureau (UK).

Privileged with its wide experience, the company has demonstrated an unflinching leadership in contributing to

pals a truly professional service.

Generally speaking, TGF offers the most comprehensive range of shipping agency services possible. In fact, about 80% of tramp vessels calling at Aqaba are under its agency and hence benefit from Jordanian exports like phosphates, potash and other cargoes.

Moreover, TGF has wide experience in handling reefer cargo, namely frozen chicken, frozen fish, and mutton. Furthermore, TGF has its in-house brokering department for fixture of vessels with phosphates, potash, cement and any other cargo in the Red Sea Area and worldwide either on exclusive or competitive basis.

TGF shipping policy is to serve the Near East economic area from several cargo entry points offering the most efficient transport network in the region.

TGF has always kept pace with the development and growing needs of the region. Over the years, its motto has been "trust" which meets with the company goals of work ethics and outstanding achievements.

TGF has been accredited with the ISO 9002 Certificate by Lloyd's Register Assurance (UK), in July 1998.



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Buying a bridal gown that won't bust the budget



Satin buster gown, worn with a satin-trimmed veil.



Chiffon dress, has Owear againO potential. Pearls are twisted around the brideOs ponytail.

By Mimi Avins

HOLLYWOOD—While many American girls spend more than 20 years fantasizing about the fairy-princess gown they hope to be married in, another kind of bride, who lives in the real world, also wants a beautiful start to living happily ever after. The practical type questions the wisdom of spending a lot of money on a dress that will be worn only once, at a time when the costs of a wedding, honeymoon and starting a new life can be considerable.

As heretical as her position might sound, the practical bride is not the only bride. Chances are she is every bit as romantic as her more extravagant sister, and no enemy of tradition. But she isn't willing to mortgage the farm or ruin her credit rating to pay for her dream dress, and she takes advantage of a number of strategies for staying on a budget, including shopping for a discounted gown, buying a white dress not expressly designed for a bride or even dressing up an inexpensive bridesmaid's dress with a bridal headpiece, veil and bouquet.

Emotional highs and down-to-earth prices can be in conflict. Peer pressure is another psychological force menacing the cost-conscious. "One of my friends couldn't stop talking about her \$3,200 dress," said Christine Franke, a development assistant for the Pasadena (Calif.) Symphony who was married in the spring. "I was determined to stay in the \$400 range, but that didn't mean I wasn't as excited as she was about getting married."

On an emotional level, skipping on the cost of a bridal gown can seem like a metaphor for not valuing the marriage that is about to begin. And the bride's place at the epicenter of the ritual makes many women feel they're worth it, no matter what "it" is. When a wedding is held up as the apex of female achievement, its vanned importance gives a woman license to splurge.

"I think brides want to feel they can blow their wad and be a little crazy," feminist author Letty Pogrebin said. "They think, 'If not now, then when?' Being a bride gives them the chance to be illogical, to be in charge, to spend in a kind of lunatic way. I've heard many women think back on it and say, 'I can't believe I did this. Now the dress is in a box under my bed, and I wish I had the money.' The overspending happens because not enough women feel they have power in the rest of their lives."

Michelle Kessler is the quintessential happy, practical bride. With her long, sun-streaked brown hair and athletic body, she'd make any "Melrose Place" casting director's head turn. A marketing executive for a fashion company in New York, Kessler bought her unconventional wedding dress soon after she became



Satin bridesmaidOs dress is paired with rosebud-studded veil.

engaged.

"I walked into the Calvin Klein boutique on Madison Avenue because I love the simplicity of his dresses," she said. "My personal style is not to be dressed up. I wouldn't feel comfortable in anything elaborate or fussy. I never went into a bridal store, and not because I didn't think I could find something simple. But something simple at Vera Wang would cost me \$8,000. I'm 31, and the whole fantasy of the big cake and all the people has worn off for me. I'm more focused on the marriage, and, at my age, you start thinking about how you'll pay tuition for the children you're going to have."

For her summer wedding, she chose a long, white, sleeveless linen dress lined in silk. "I took it off the rack, tried it on, they planned the hem on a little, and that was it. It cost \$800, and I won't wear a veil. If I wear any jewelry at all, it'll just be little diamond stud earrings. My goal was to find something simple, elegant and comfortable that I could wear again and that I would feel like myself in. I didn't want to look like I could be popped onto the top of a cake."

Simplicity has been the most significant bridal styling trend of the decade. When Carolyn Bessette Kennedy married John F. Kennedy Jr. wearing a plain, bias-cut gown two years ago, instead of being in the vanguard, she merely personified the no-frills look brides had been favoring for years. But simplicity doesn't necessarily come cheap.

"Ironically, the more expensive a gown is, the simpler it will often be,"

said Renee Strauss, who owns Renee Strauss for the Bride in Beverly Hills. "A woman who pays \$5,000 to \$10,000 for a gown is paying for a designer label and often for custom details like a longer train or a detachable train. In general, you expect that the styling of the more costly gowns would be better, and that's what you're getting for your money, but there are exceptions."

Fine lace and hand beading can drive up the price of a wedding gown, but, since plain is in, many women opt for any white dress that pleases them.

The "wear it again" factor goes up considerably with a dress like the \$495 bias-cut gown Les Habitudes makes in white crushed velvet or ivory satin. Most of the beaded, corset-topped gowns at Les Habitudes sell for \$3,000 to \$6,000. But the store operates an annex for markdowns.

At Les Habitudes Bis around the corner, merchandise is half off or more. A corset marked down to \$900 could be paired with an inexpensive satin, chiffon or crepe skirt to create the romantic look in which the boutique has dressed many a bride.

Gowns that look as if they weren't meant for Snow White are favorites of older brides: Barbara Streisand wanted the whole fairy tale for her summer wedding, but many women marrying for the second or third time feel foolish in conventionally dreamy gowns.

"You don't need to spend \$5,000 for tradition," Pogrebin points out. "If you're the only one with a pouf on your head wearing a white dress, you're going to look like the bride. Carry some calla

lilies, and you're a bride." Renee Strauss suggests that a woman who's considering wearing an inexpensive bridesmaid's dress instead of a wedding gown try it on with a veil to get the full effect. Well-made bridesmaid's dresses range from \$160 to \$350. They don't come with trains, which can be a liability or a benefit, depending on how formal the wedding will be and how much the bride likes to dance.

"Even though they're not expensive, some bridesmaid's dresses are made of beautiful fabrics like silk, chiffon," Strauss said. Most samples are in color, so a bride has to imagine how she will look if the same dress is made for her in white or ivory.

The most inveterate bargain hunter often balks at shopping for a cut-rate wedding gown. But because no caption runs under the wedding picture saying, "This dress was bought on sale," who's to know? Most bridal boutiques have sale racks where sample size 10s, the equivalent of a size 8 in a regular dress, are discounted from 20 percent to as much as 75 percent. A store will mark down a sample because the style has been discontinued by the manufacturer, the fit is poor on most bodies, or it has been a slow seller and getting rid of it will make room for a potentially more popular style. Another way to save money is to hunt for accessories on sale. The costs of a veil, headpiece and shoes can add up.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Orson Welles' genius emerges in re-edited 'Evil'

By Stephen Hunter

POOR JANET Leigh never had much luck in motels. In "Psycho," she was stabbed to death in a motel shower. And in "Touch of Evil," something much worse happened: She was locked in a motel room, deprived of sleep and made to listen to bebop music until she cracked.

But if she didn't have much luck in motels, she had great luck in movies set in motels: after all, she was in both "Psycho" and "Touch of Evil."

The greatness of the former is beyond argument, and now, happily, so is the latter. Orson Welles' mad 1958 candy-factory of film noir bonbons and his own sugar-soaked nougat-slathered acting is back, finally readied to his specifications after Universal took it from his control and tried to reinvent it as a regular thriller. That was akin to trying to turn one of Liberace's rhinestone-studded jackets into a nice Republican cloth coat.

Moreover, it contained what is considered the definitive corporate atrocity against genius: The Universal editors layered the titles over the movie's most flamboyant sequence, a three-minute no-cut tracking shot that set up the premise, introduced the characters, defined the milieu and got the story miling—a flourish of brilliance that has never been matched.

That is the first thing you notice in this restored version, formally titled "The Re-Edit of 'Touch of Evil'." The titles have been removed from the film's opening, and that great gush of genius, at last, is rendered without an interfering scrim. The film's sound editing has also been restored, re-admitting Welles' use of overlapping dialogue and impressionistic sound (he served time in radio, after all). And the time scheme has been slightly altered: The original studio release in 1958 recast the

narrative into strictly chronological sequences. Welles' own plan was to cross-cut, to suggest that things were happening simultaneously. The new editors, Walter Murch and Rick Schmidlin, have gone to a great deal of trouble to rescue his original concept.

One result is that it seems the long brutalization of Leigh in that motel room has been spread throughout the film; this somehow intensifies it uncomfortably, giving us time to imagine what is going on instead of merely hitting us over the head quickly. That's part of the movie's fascination, too, with exploitation: It teasingly contrives to get the most curvaceous women in the world stripped down to one of those undergarment contraptions of the '50s that seem an enterprise of both prurience and world-class elastic-stress engineering. It turns her body into a stylization of art moderne and deco; it weirdly and dangerously eroticizes her ordeal (as, ironically, Hitchcock would do two years later in "Psycho").

That wasn't the only dangerous thing the ever-adventurous Welles did. He built the film out of taboo oppositions (there are three white-Hispanic couples). That's the touch of evil he was documenting: sexual resentment as it played across racial grounds.

That he approached such ideas is amazing; that he got them into a B-

movie in 1958 is truly heroic, particularly when one considers how his career had collapsed since its apogee in 1940, when he flew out to Hollywood to shoot "Citizen Kane" with an unprecedented amount of freedom. By 1958, with one unmitigated



Janet Leigh

commercial failure after another on his resume, he had achieved an almost unprecedented lack of freedom.

In fact, so unusual is the film's origin that it seems to represent the artist's cynicism at its highest point, his contempt for Hollywood. He agreed to take the worst script Universal owned if he could rewrite it for two weeks (the script was originally adapted from "Badge of Evil" by Whit Masterson). He had to know they would take it from him. They always did. But his credo seemed to be: I will make art from crap, because that is what I do; then you will turn it back into crap, because that is what you do.

Permission was ultimately granted when Charlton Heston, then at the peak of his star power on the strength of "The Ten Commandments," agreed to star, out of his own enthusiasm for Welles' work. His reward was the thankless role of the straight-arrow good guy amid all the orphans of human evil flourishing in the housewife atmosphere of what looked like a Mexican border town, but was really Venice, Calif. And on top of that, Heston had to wear shoe polish on his face and some-

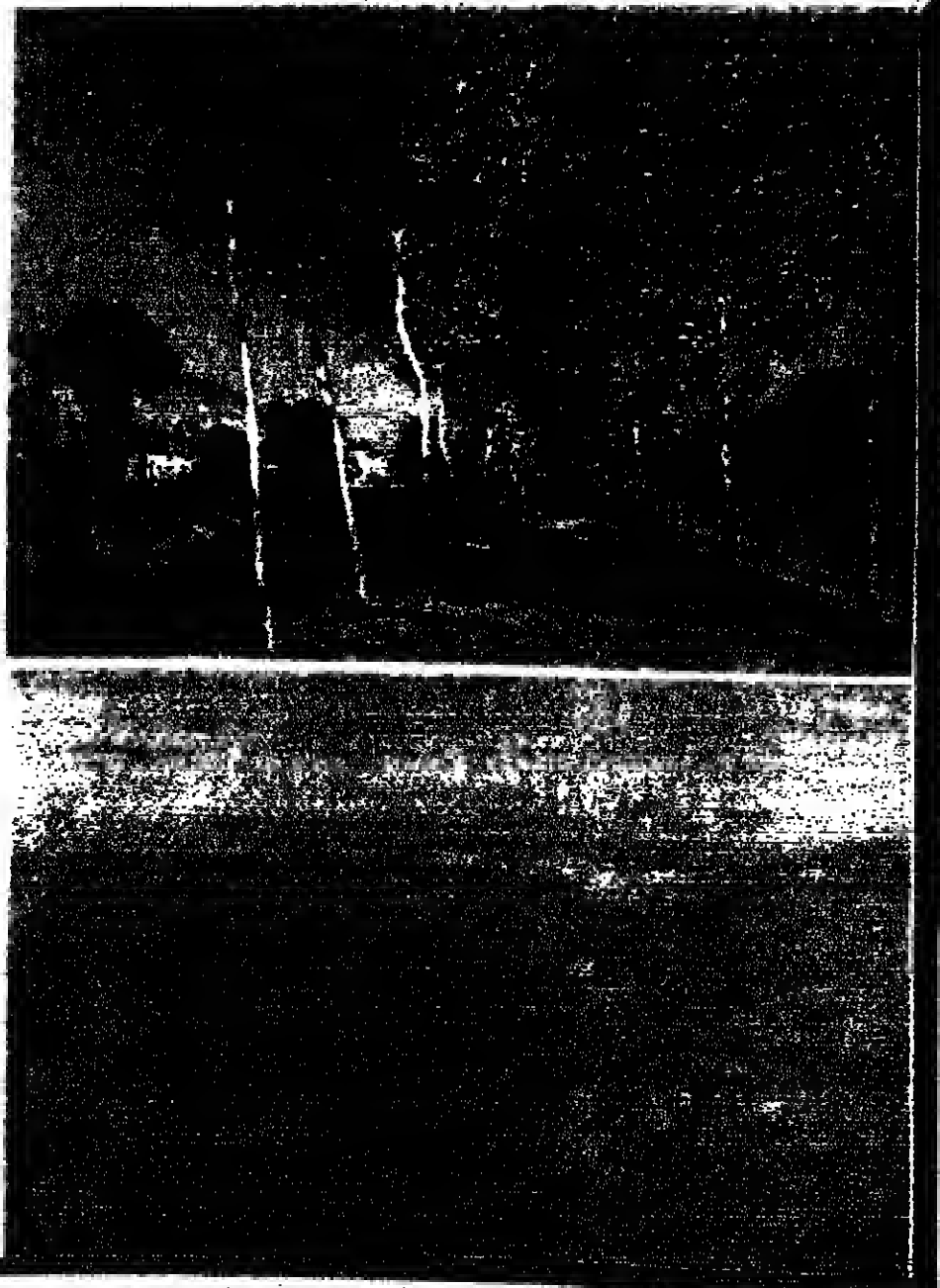
body's idea of a Mexican mustache!

The movie really exists in three planes. Its first, the story, is the least interesting: In a corrupt border town, a visiting Mexican police agent named Vargas (Heston) discovers that a legendary American lawman named Hank Quinlan (Welles) is fabricating evidence to convict a Mexican youth of murder. When he presses his objection, the old cop bands with a Mexican crime boss (Akim Tamiroff) to kidnap the agent's wife (Leigh), but the agent rescues his wife, pursues the investigation and ultimately brings the lawman down. Only then—a cheapo ironic denouement—does it become clear that the Mexican youth really was guilty of the crime.

You could write a better story in a morning without coffee. What makes the film extraordinary is its second plane, which is the visual. Using the brilliant cinematographer Russell Metty and shooting in the then largely passe black-and-white, Welles unleashed a torrent of nightmare images that set the piece not in "El Rohles," or even in Venice, but in his own subconscious. We are strangers in that strange land.

You can pick any of two dozen moments of genius in the film, but to do that, really, is to atomize the totality of it. It is of a piece, one dark rhapsody on the theme of guilt and pride, set in a swirling sewer of a place, peopled with grotesques of such vividness that they linger in your mind like Munch's screamer on the bridge.

The camera itself is almost a character; it glides through the perfectly synopocated action, its grace the only note of beauty in the squalor. It stops now and then to admire a particularly grotesque character, such as Dennis Weaver's craven motel manager, a being so creepy he would give Norman Bates the shakes.



Alfred Sisley's painting "Allee des Peupliers" (1890) (top) and Claude Monet's "Fatales pres de Dieppe" (1897) (bottom) were stolen from a thieves broke into the home of the director and forced him to take them into the museum where they overpowered the guards.

Reuters